The New Deal in Khaki *by Adam Lapin*

# NEW MASSES

*FIFTEEN CENTS*

*July 2, 1940*

## HOW TO DEFEND AMERICA

## A People's Program

*An Editorial Article*

JAMES W. FORD, RUTH McKENNEY, ALVAH BESSIE, JAMES MORISON

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# Between Ourselves

ONE of our neighbors went north of the border last week and returned with the tale of a garden party on the estate of Capt. James Flanagan, who happens to live in luxury in a suburb of Toronto. The binge was held, ironically enough, under the auspices of the Ramsay MacDonald branch of the IODE, which, we suppose, means Independent Order of the Dames of the Empire—or some such thing. Well, it seems our neighbor dropped in and enjoyed the swimming and especially a bevy of beautiful Dolphinettes. Tea was served on the terrace and a beautiful Scarlett O'Hara doll was raffled off. The proceeds were devoted to the purchase of a bomber.

Then a friend of ours came back from a trip to California and told us about another party. This one was in a backyard—renamed patio—in Orange County, Calif. "No one mentioned the movies. It was a pleasant afternoon and evening under the loveliest sky I have ever seen," she said. "The trick was—the proceeds went to NM." And she handed us a sizable check.

On the way east—she motored—NM stuck in her mind. Anyhow, she kept asking various people, hitchhikers, service station attendants, roadside rest owners and state policemen if they had ever heard of NM. Surprisingly, seven good Americans and true with habitats all the way from Lordsburg, N. M., to Troutville, Va., allowed that it was a magazine they knew and had read. According to count, eighteen others heard of it for the first time. She thought NM readers ought to do the same thing the next time they take out the jalopy for a short or long trip.

The postman is already kicking twice at the weight of the mail in response to our request for reports. From distant Idaho a letter writer has this to say: "Judging from your pages, the East is all het up about what's going on over in Europe. Here in Caldwell you won't find the slightest interest in that war. Not that we don't know that Canada is right over the mountains; we do. But distance lends perspective and we see through lots of the flimflam. Some of our townspeople have a little committee which meets in a church Wednesday nights. They got out a leaflet the other day which I thought you might like to know about. It goes like this:

"'We view with apprehension the manner in which our political leaders are trying to create an atmosphere of war hysteria. We find no reason to turn our energies to the building of a great war machine. There is plenty of work to do right here at home. In the meantime, it is our duty as well as that of officials of our government to make America a better land because it is at peace—and intends to remain at peace.'"

An able-bodied seaman who happened to ship out to the other side during the past few weeks, writes: "I thought you might like to know what kind of people were able to get passports out of the European hot spots and sail on mercy vessels for America. I was on that refugee liner which went over to save stranded American citizens. Our ambassador in England, Mr. Kennedy, used up valuable space on board by granting visas to a woman who used to be Mrs. John Jacob Astor—she's got a British title now. She had six rooms all to herself and her maid. Next door to her was a British nobleman, a nasty fellow who tried to throw a news photographer overboard when we docked. And another one was a British doctor who, they told me, was coming over here to tell us Yankees what is what and why we ought to kick in with everything we got for the good old empire, wot say? One woman, her name was Lady Ribbledibble or something like that, she says to the steward, 'You know, steward, my body may be on this ship, but my soul, my soul is still in dear old London.' The steward tells her that's very interesting, but what will she have for breakfast. . . . I thought that NM, which is the paper I read first when I come ashore, ought to know about these things."

R. L. writes from Manhattan: "I'm a high school boy who's been reading my dad's NM. Send it to me this summer at Winthrop, Me., where I'm to be camp counselor. Enclosed is Dad's check. . . ." Down Texas way, from Abilene: "The Elite Guard is busy recruiting around here—for what I wonder. It costs $10 to enroll. Here's $1 for ten weeks' subscription to NM. That leaves me with $9 and no ambition to become elite. Besides, I'm afraid of guns. They go off sometimes."

Correction and apology: The woodcut on page 30 of last week's issue was by Beatrice Mandelbaum and not, as credited, by Louis Ribak.

The editors of NM are going campward weekends during July and August. They will meet you, if you are to be found in the north country or down east, and will speak to you of current events. At Beacon, Unity, and Lake Camps, we have booked, in addition to our regular speakers, such well known and diverse lecturers as George Murphy, Joseph Clark, Paul Crosbie, Shaemas O'Sheel, James Morison, Ruth McKenney, Gen. Victor Yakhontoff, and Alfred Goldstein. We trust that this corps of experts will add to the pleasure of your summer vacation. At Chester's Zunbarg a special event will take place on August 4, when Harry Cumpson, pianist, and Alison Burroughs, singer, will join in a program for the benefit of NM. It gives us a warm feeling to realize that in so many places, from coast to coast, friends of NM are not forgetting our financial problems during the warm weather.

## *Who's Who*

ADAM LAPIN is NM and *Daily Worker* correspondent in Washington. . . . Alvah Bessie, dramatic critic for NM, is author of *Men in Battle,* a book based on his experience with the Abraham Lincoln Battalion in Spain. . . . James Ford is vice presidential candidate of the Communist Party, USA. . . . Ralph Ellison, who has contributed articles and reviews to NM before, is a young Negro writer. . . . James Morison, a free lance labor journalist, is a regular contributor to NM. . . . J. R. Wilson is an expert on taxation. . . . Cora MacAlbert has contributed to NM before, as well as to the *New Yorker,* the *New Republic, Coronet,* and other publications. . . . Herbert Aptheker is the author of *The Negro in the Civil War* and *Negro Slave Revolts in the United States.*

## *Flashbacks*

TO INCREASE our activities on behalf of the anti-Nazis whom French reactionaries first imprisoned and then agreed to deliver to Hitler, comes this grim reminder: The blood purge in Germany was staged June 30, 1934. . . . The anti-Nazis, we recall this week, are part of a strong German tradition of resistance to war and imperialism: June 28, 1916, Karl Liebknecht was sentenced to thirty months in prison for his peace activities; and Clara Zetkin, Communist woman leader whose birthday falls in July, made the first Communist speech in the Reichstag July 2, 1920. . . . If the eyes of the world were not already focused on the conflicting interests of the imperialists in the Balkans one of this week's anniversaries would turn all attention there: June 28, 1914, the Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand, was assassinated. . . . For making his famous anti-war speech at Canton, O., Eugene V. Debs was arrested June 30, 1918.

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NEW MASSES

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# How to Defend America

## Genuine national defense goes hand in hand with the expansion of the people's rights. FDR's "defense" program follows totalitarian patterns. An editorial article.

How can we defend America? This is the question that towers in every headline, in every act of the Roosevelt administration, in every pronouncement of the Republican Party. This is the question that tugs at the minds of millions of the plain people of the country. They want to know. Their welfare, their very lives may depend on knowing. What are the answers?

Look at France, we are urged—at France, broken on the wheel of Nazi conquest. We are being told that the lesson of France is that America must arm to the teeth, America must prepare to enter the war against Germany, America must sacrifice its liberties, must sacrifice everything to "defend our way of life." Yes, the French people are today writing the answers for us with their own blood. But let us make certain that we read aright those grave, historic answers. For the most important lesson of France is: *do not trust the fate of the country to the enemies of the people.*

### THE MUNICH BREAKTHROUGH

Wars do not just happen. Military operations are but the consummation of a whole series of political acts that have gone before. The breakthrough in France did not occur on May 10, 1940, on the Meuse. It occurred on Sept. 30, 1938, at Munich. The battle of France was lost, not on the Somme, but a year earlier in Moscow when the British and French governments rejected the mutual assistance pact that could have saved peace and France. Blum's non-intervention scheme which strangled democratic Spain proved more lethal than Hitler's *Panzerdivisionen.* And so, when we consider the military defense of the United States—that is, the defense of the independence and democratic rights of the American people—we must consider who it is that commands these arms and for what ends. The French government was led by those who did the bidding of the two hundred wealthy families who controlled the economic life of the country; they betrayed France and led it to disaster. A government which surrenders to the American counterparts of the two hundred families can only lead to similar betrayal and disaster. That is why the American people must oppose the so-called defense program of the Roosevelt administration or of any Republican administration. Behind both stand the fascist-minded economic royalists, the kings of steel and oil and munitions who rob the American people and drive them to war in the same way as the Thyssens and Krupps (though Fritz Thyssen now professes to repudiate the consequences of his own crimes) have robbed the German people and driven them to war. Under the flag of defense of country the Roosevelt administration, with Republican support on all essential questions, is actually preparing to send our youth to defend and extend with their lives the far-flung empire of Wall Street.

### SHORTCUTS TO WAR

Ever since Sept. 3, 1939, this has become evident in innumerable ways. "Measures short of war" have proved to be measures that are shortcuts to war. Loud talk about the Nazi threat to America provides the emotional background for act after act of unneutrality and war, committed without consulting the people and in gross violation of American and international law. But the American people do not want war against any country. They want peace above everything else. A new *Fortune* survey confirms this afresh. It shows that while a majority—though by no means all—of the people have been tricked into favoring aid to one side in the imperialist conflict, the Allies', only 7.7 percent favor entering the war immediately on the side of the Allies; another 19.2 percent would favor going to war only if the Allies seem sure to lose. In other words, despite all the feverish propaganda and synthetic alarums, fully three-quarters of the American people are resolutely opposed to entering the European war under any circumstances. And they are beginning to make themselves heard in Congress. Even the June 21 issue of a pro-war magazine, the *United States News,* admits:

> A flood of telegrams and letters imploring that the United States be kept out of war is deluging members of Congress. This activity has been accentuated greatly since the President's speech at Charlottesville, and members attribute the uneasiness which has been aroused, especially among women, to the tone employed by the chief executive rather than to his words. The result is a stiffening of congressional determination to maintain non-belligerency.

The hypocrisy of the administration's anti-fascist pose in European affairs is revealed in the State Department's defense of the fascist dictator of Brazil, Vargas, and in its attitude toward Japan. The United States now has the largest navy in the world. Huge additional appropriations have been voted at this session of Congress. Yet on top of this the House has just passed a new bill for a two-ocean navy, providing for a 70 percent increase in fighting ships. This will cost $4,000,000,000. Why this fantastic increase? For possible simultaneous war with Germany and Japan. But—and here's the rub—it is the United States who is arming Japan and thus helping make future war with her inevitable. Just as British and French business interests supplied Germany and Italy with the materials for their war machines—later to have them reexported via the cannon mouth—so American business interests, backed by the government, are providing Japan with more than 50 percent of the materials she requires for her war against China and her future war against the United States. There is profit in treason. And for the sake of this profitable war trade the American people are being asked to pay through the nose for a two-ocean navy! What's more, while America frantically arms for future war with Japan, the Roosevelt administration, faithful to the great tradition of Chamberlain and Daladier, prepares to appease Japan at the expense of China. Feelers are being sent out from Washington in the direction of Tokyo. Roosevelt and Wall Street prefer a not-too-strong-but-not-too-weak imperialist Japan to a strong democratic China. For victorious Chinese democracy will clean out all imperialist freebooters, including the American, who have been pillaging China for decades.

### THE REAL THREAT

Let us not be deluded by phrases. The beam in our own eye is very large indeed. The fascist threat to America is not three thousand miles away; it is right here in our own backyard. It consists not alone of Nazi Bundists and Father Coughlins and anti-Semitic groups. The real power is far more respectable. The fountainhead of fascism is the same in America as in Germany and Italy, as in France, England, and every capitalist country: big business. Secretary of the Interior Ickes understood this when in December 1937 he denounced big business fascism. President Roosevelt understood this when on April 29, 1938, in a message to Congress proposing an investigation of monopoly, he declared that the danger to our liberties "comes from that concentrated pri-

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vate economic power which is struggling so hard to master our democratic government." Now the President has surrendered to the very danger he warned against. He has placed this private economic power in control of the nation's destiny. Finance, steel, and munitions are masters of the government today. This is the meaning of Roosevelt's appointment to head the "advisory" national defense commission of Edward Stettinius, chairman of the US Steel Corp., dominated by the House of Morgan, and William S. Knudsen, president of General Motors, controlled by the du Pont and Morgan interests. These gentlemen have been given full power to gear the country for M-Day. They are big business fascism in the flesh.

The fascist blueprint for America is emerging with startling speed. Last week President Roosevelt proposed universal compulsory service for the youth. This is one of the most sinister schemes for regimenting a free people that has ever been devised. It goes beyond anything that the totalitarian British and French governments have attempted. The democratic label pasted on cannot hide the stamp beneath: made in Germany.

Under this Hitleresque plan every young man and woman in the United States would have to submit to a one-year period of service in either the army or navy, or at non-combatant forced labor in connection with war preparations. In commenting on this proposal Roosevelt made it clear that apart from its military aspects, it was designed to stamp out "isms" and deal with those "who thought they knew more than anybody else about the nation's social and economic problems."

This is the President's answer to the American Youth Congress demand for jobs, civil liberties, and peace. And, significantly, he has chosen Sidney Hillman, the "labor" representative on the Stettinius-Knudsen commission, to put this vast regimentation plan into concrete form.

### UNIVERSAL SERVICE

The universal service proposal has been followed by the introduction of a compulsory conscription bill by that veteran fifth-columnist, Senator Burke, Nebraska Democrat. The bill is sponsored by the national emergency committee of the Military Training Camps Association, a rich men's club which spawned the "Plattsburg Idea" and other ideas for militarizing the country. Senator Burke, admirer of Adolf Hitler and Tom Girdler, is obviously also serving as a stalking horse for the administration. Democratic-Republican unity is indicated by the fact that in the House the peacetime conscription bill has been sponsored by Representative Wadsworth, New York Republican. Under this measure all male citizens and aliens between eighteen and sixty-five must register. Those between twenty-one and forty-five are to receive active training in the armed forces while the others will be liable for service in home defense units. The men in active service will be paid the munificent sum of $5 a month and traveling expenses. The Burke-Wadsworth bill will thus have the virtue of liquidating WPA and reducing the pay of conscripted workers to the coolie level. And it is perfectly democratic—the rich and poor get the same $5 a month.

In the spirit of this $5 a month wage, far-reaching propaganda has been started to the effect that the defense of France was undermined not by the sabotage and treason of Daladier, Blum, and their capitalist bosses, but by the social gains of the Popular Front. At a time when the profits of the large corporations are leaping to spectacular heights, labor is being told that it must sacrifice, that it must surrender the National Labor Relations Act, the Walsh-Healey act, the Wage-Hour Act, and similar measures. The air of democratic America has, in fact, become infested with the noxious doctrines of the Walter Lippmanns and Dorothy Thompsons and their "liberal" claquers who assert that the best way to defend liberty is to abandon it, the best way to fight fascism is to go fascist. Every act of the Roosevelt administration, even where it feels compelled to make certain temporary concessions to the strength of labor, shows that essentially this is the philosophy it has embraced in place of the New Deal.

### SOCIAL DEFENSE

The defense of democracy begins at home. John L. Lewis told the Republican platform committee that the greatest menace to America is the shrunken bellies of the poor. Of what use are billions for arms if the fortress of America is taken from within by the fifth column in high places? A fascist invasion of our democracy has been launched by the lords of finance and industry. It can be repelled only through a program of economic and social defense. The pre-war Franklin D. Roosevelt understood this too. It was he who said in his annual message to Congress on Jan. 5, 1939: "Our nation's program of social and economic reform is therefore a part of defense as basic as armaments themselves." This idea is as sound today as it was a year and a half ago. But, ironically, only the Communists defend it today, and for this they are persecuted by the once-New Deal administration.

The Republicans meet in Philadelphia to nominate presidential and vice presidential candidates and adopt an election platform; the Democrats prepare to meet next month in Chicago. But it was the Communist Party, at its recent convention in New York, which adopted a New Deal platform of economic and social reform that is basic to the defense of America.

President Roosevelt, in his speech at Chautauqua, N. Y., in June 1936, warned against those who, "seeking immediate riches —fool's gold—would attempt to break down or evade our neutrality"; and he said: "If we face the choice of profits or peace, the nation will answer—must answer—'We choose peace.'" But it is the Communists who in 1940 demand a genuine policy of neutrality and peace and a halt to "the blood-soaked trade in munitions and instruments of war." Roosevelt in the past recommended taxation of the rich and opposed taxes that cut into purchasing power. Today his henchmen in Congress put through a war tax measure that lowers income tax exemption and boosts levies on articles of mass consumption; at the same time they eliminate from the bill two mild amendments providing for taxes on excess profits and war profits (see the article by J. R. Wilson elsewhere in this issue). It is the Communists, on the other hand, who, speaking at their recent convention through Earl Browder, their candidate for President, demand that

> the government shall place the most drastic taxation upon profits, to guarantee that the burden of taxation shall be placed where it shall least disturb the general standard of living, and that the monopolists and profiteers shall be deprived of their mo-

*(Continued on page 23)*

## *Senator Burke of Nebraska*

WHAT manner of man is this Sen. Edward Burke (Dem., Neb.) who authors legislation which in effect drafts forty million American citizens for military service? Let's glance at some old newspaper headlines. Shortly after Munich Senator Burke returned from a visit to Europe, and was interviewed by reporters. Said the New York *Herald Tribune*: "SENATOR BURKE PRAISES HITLER AND NAZI'S RULE AS HE RETURNS." According to the story, Burke "praised without stint the accomplishments of the Nazi regime in Germany. He saw Chancellor Adolf Hitler as even a 'greater man than Bismarck' and declared the annexation of the Sudeten German territory by the Reich was justified."

Mr. Burke, it seems, also likes Hitler's "accomplishments" in the labor field. The senator has tried hard to destroy the Wagner act. First he offered a bill to repeal the act entirely. Failing that, he offered some amendments that would have accomplished about the same thing. He secured an investigation of the NLRB on charges that it was unfair to company unions and favored the CIO over the AFL. Even the AFL's general counsel informed the investigating committee that the inquiry was "unnecessary and uncalled for." Hearings were begun anyway, but collapsed for lack of evidence. The senator's futility, plus his yen for headlines, led the press gallery to dub him "Throttlebottom Burke." Recently his anti-labor reputation has been slightly obscured by the rise of Martin Dies and Howard Smith. Now he holds the headlines again. His Hitler proposals, like Dies' and Reynolds', get administration support —on the ground that they help to "defend America against Hitler."

Burke is a "lame duck" senator. He was repudiated at the polls last April in the Democratic primaries. Labor's Non-Partisan League played a large part in that defeat. That should serve as sufficient warning to those congressional gentlemen who embrace the Roosevelt war policies.

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# War and the Workers

## V. I. Lenin's analysis of the class character of war. A brilliant contribution to clear thinking today. How to end the war.

This article is a short extract from a lecture delivered by Lenin on May 27, 1917, about a month after his return from exile. The manuscript of the lecture was not discovered until twelve years later and was first printed in the Moscow *Pravda* on April 23, 1929. It has just been published for the first time in English in a pamphlet entitled *War and the Workers,* issued by International Publishers. This remarkable pamphlet embodies in concentrated form all of Lenin's most important ideas concerning the last imperialist war. It illuminates as well the basic problems of the present imperialist war, much of it reading as if it had been written today.—THE EDITORS.

IT SEEMS to me that the main thing that is usually forgotten in the question of the war, which receives inadequate attention; the main reason why there is so much controversy, and, I would say, futile, hopeless, and aimless controversy, is that people forget the fundamental question of the class character of the war; why the war broke out; the classes that are waging it; the historical and historico-economic conditions that gave rise to it.

From the point of view of Marxism, that is, of modern scientific socialism, the fundamental question for Socialists in discussing how this war should be appraised, and what our attitude toward it should be, is the objects of the war and the classes which prepared for it and directed it. We Marxists are not among those who are absolutely opposed to all war. We say: our object is to achieve the socialist system of society, which, by abolishing the division of mankind into classes, by abolishing all exploitation of man by man, and of one nation by other nations, will inevitably abolish all possibility of war. In the war for this socialist system of society, however, we will inevitably meet a situation in which the class struggle in each nation may collide with a war, caused by this very class struggle, between different nations. For this reason we cannot deny the possibility of revolutionary wars, that is, of wars arising out of the class struggle, conducted by revolutionary classes, and having direct, immediate, revolutionary significance. We cannot deny this particularly because the history of European revolutions during the past century, the past 125 to 135 years, shows that in addition to the majority of wars, which were reactionary, there have been revolutionary wars; for example, the war waged by the revolutionary masses of the people of France against united, monarchist, backward, feudal, and semifeudal Europe.

Even at the present time there is no more widespread deception of the masses in western Europe, and lately here in Russia, than references to revolutionary wars. There are wars and wars. We must examine the historical conditions which gave rise to each particular war, the classes which conducted it, and for what objects. Unless we do this, all our arguments about war will be reduced to futility; to a wordy and barren controversy.

*Lenin in 1920*

### CLAUSEWITZ

We know of the aphorism uttered by one of the most celebrated writers on the philosophy and history of war—Clausewitz—which reads as follows: "War is a continuation of politics by other means." This was uttered by a writer who reviewed the history of war and drew philosophical lessons from it soon after the epoch of the Napoleonic wars. This writer, whose fundamental ideas have now become an undoubted acquisition for all thinking people, eighty years ago combated the philistine and ignorant prejudice that war can be separated from the politics of the respective governments, the respective classes; that war can at any time be regarded simply as aggression, which disturbs peace, followed by the restoration of this peace. As much as to say: People quarreled, and then made up! This is a crude and ignorant opinion, refuted scores of years ago, and refuted now by a more or less careful analysis of any historical epoch of war.

War is a continuation of politics by other means. Every war is inseparably connected with the political system which gave rise to it. The politics which a certain country, a certain class in that country, pursued for a long period before the war are inevitably pursued by that very same class during the war; it merely changes its form of action.

Peace reigned in Europe; but this peace was maintained because the rule of the European nations over hundreds of millions of inhabitants of colonies was exercised only by constant, uninterrupted, and ceaseless wars, which we Europeans do not regard as wars, because often they resembled, not wars, but the brutal massacre, extermination, of unarmed people. And the whole point is that to understand modern war we must first of all glance over the politics of the European powers as a whole. We must not take individual examples, individual cases, which can easily be torn from the general context of social phenomena, and which are valueless, because it is just as easy to quote opposite examples. No, we must take the whole of the politics of the whole system of European states in their economic and political concatenation, so as to understand how the present war steadily and inevitably arose out of this system.

Today we are confronted, first of all, by two groups of capitalist powers. We have before us all the great world capitalist powers—England, France, America, Germany—the politics of which for a number of decades consisted of unceasing economic rivalry for world supremacy, to strangle small nationalities, to secure threefold and tenfold profits for bank capital, which has enmeshed the whole world in the chains of its influence. These are the real politics of England and of Germany. I emphasize this. We must never tire of emphasizing this, because if we forget it we shall never understand anything about modern war, and we shall be helplessly in the power of any bourgeois writer who palms off fraudulent phrases.

### IMPERIALIST RIVALRY

These politics show us only one thing: ceaseless economic rivalry between two great world giants, two capitalist systems. On the one hand there is England, a state which owns a great part of the globe; the wealthiest state in the world; which created this wealth not so much by the labor of its workers as by the exploitation of vast colonies, by the vast power of the English banks which, constituting a numerically insignificant group of three, four, or five giant banks, stand at the head of all the other banks, controlling hundreds of billions of rubles, and controlling in such a way that we can say without exaggeration: there is not a spot on the whole globe that this capital has not laid its heavy hand on; there is not a patch of land that is not enmeshed by a thousand threads in the net of British capital. By the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries this capital had grown to such enormous proportions that its activities extended far beyond the

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frontiers of a single state and created a group of giant banks possessing incredible wealth. Pushing this insignificant number of banks to the front, it enmeshed the whole world in this net of hundreds of billions of rubles. This is the main thing in the economic policy of England and the economic policy of France.

On the other hand, opposed to this group, mainly Anglo-French, stands another group of capitalists, even more predatory and more piratical—a group which came to the capitalist feasting board when all the places had been taken, but which introduced into the struggle new methods of developing capitalist production, better technique, incomparable organization, which transformed the old capitalism, the capitalism of the epoch of free competition, into the capitalism of gigantic trusts, syndicates, and cartels. This group introduced the principle of state capitalist production, uniting the gigantic forces of capitalism with the gigantic forces of the states into one mechanism, and amalgamating tens of millions of people in a single organization of state capitalism. Yes, that group of predatory powers did indeed attack Belgium with incredible ferocity; but it only did what the other group of robbers did yesterday by other means, and is doing today against other nations.

It remains for me now, in accordance with the short plan that I drew up for today's lecture, to touch on the question of "revolutionary national defense."

### WHAT SORT OF REVOLUTION?

"Revolutionary national defense" is the name given to the justification of the war by means of arguments such as: We have made a revolution, we are a revolutionary people, we are a revolutionary democracy. What is our reply to this? What sort of a revolution have we made? We have overthrown Nicholas. This revolution was not so difficult, if we compare it with a revolution that would completely overthrow the landlord and capitalist classes. Who came into power after our revolution? The landlords and the capitalists—the very classes that have long been in power in Europe. There, revolutions like this took place a hundred years ago; there, the Tereshchenkos, Milyukovs, and Konovalovs[1] have long been in power; and whether they have a Civil List for their kings, or do without this article of luxury, makes no difference. A bank remains a bank, capital is invested in concessions, profits remain profits, whether in a republic or in a monarchy. If any savage country dares to disobey our civilized capital, which establishes such fine banks in the colonies, in Africa and Persia; if any savage nation disobeys our civilized banks we send troops there and they introduce culture, order, and civilization, as Lyakhov[2] did in Persia and as the French "republican" troops, with equal savagery, exterminated the people of Africa. The new "revolutionary" national defense is merely the use of the lofty concept revolution to cover up the sordid and bloody war for the sordid and disgusting treaties.

The Russian revolution has not changed the character of the war, but it has created organizations the like of which exist in no other country, and did not exist during the majority of revolutions in the West. In the majority of revolutions a new government came forward consisting of men of the type of our Tereshchenkos and Konovalovs, while the country remained in a state of passivity and disorganization. The Russian revolution went further. This fact contains the embryo of the possibility that it will conquer the war. The fact is that in addition to the government of "near-Socialist" ministers, the imperialist war government, the government which started the offensive, the government which is connected with Anglo-French capital, in addition to it, and independently of it, we have all over Russia a network of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. This is the revolution which has not yet said its last word. This is the revolution that western Europe did not have under such conditions. These are the organizations of the classes who really need no annexations, who have no millions deposited in the banks, and who, perhaps, are not interested in whether the Russian Colonel Lyakhov and the British Liberal ambassador divided up Persia properly. This is the guarantee that this revolution can go still further. It lies in the fact that the classes who are really not interested in annexation, notwithstanding their extreme faith in the capitalist government; notwithstanding the terrible confusion, the terrible deception that is contained in the very term "revolutionary" national defense, notwithstanding the fact that they are supporting the loan, supporting the imperialist war government—notwithstanding all this, they have succeeded in creating organizations in which the masses of the oppressed classes are represented.

Now I come to the last question. This is the question of how to end the war. The war now being waged by the capitalists of all countries cannot be brought to an end without a workers' revolution against these capitalists. Until control has passed from the sphere of phrases to the sphere of action, until a government of the revolutionary proletariat has taken the place of the capitalist government, the government will be condemned to do nothing more than moan: we are doomed, doomed, doomed! Today, in "free" England, Socialists are being imprisoned for saying what I am saying. In Germany, Liebknecht is in jail for saying what I am saying; and in Austria, Friedrich Adler[3] is in jail for saying the same thing. The sympathy of the masses of the workers in all countries is on the side of these Socialists, and not on the side of those who have deserted to the side of their capitalists. The workers' revolution is growing all over the world.

### AMERICA AND THE WAR

As regards America's entry into the war I will say the following. It is argued that in America there is democracy, that there is a "White House" there. I say: slavery was abolished half a century ago. The war over slavery ended in 1865. Since then billionaires have sprung up. They hold the whole of America in their financial grip, are preparing to strangle Mexico, and will inevitably go to war with Japan over the partition of the Pacific. Preparations for this war have been going on for several decades already. A heap of books have been written on the subject. And America's real object in entering this war is to prepare for war against Japan. The American people enjoy considerable freedom, and it is difficult to believe that they will tolerate conscription, the creation of an army for aims of conquest, for a struggle against Japan, for example. The Americans can see from the example of Europe what this leads to.

Painting by Sokolov

*Lenin in 1917 during the October Days*

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We do not want to "usurp" power, for the whole experience of revolution teaches that only a power that is backed by the majority of the people can be durable. Consequently, the "usurpation" of power would be merely an adventure; and our party would not agree to anything of the kind.

How can the war be brought to an end? What would we do if the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies took power and the Germans continued the war? Those who are interested in our party's views may have read in our newspaper *Pravda* the other day an exact quotation from what we said abroad as far back as 1915: if the revolutionary class of Russia, the working class, comes into power, it must offer to conclude peace. And if our terms are rejected by the German capitalists, or by the capitalists of any other country, the working class will be entirely in favor of war.

### NO EASY WAY OUT

We do not propose to end the war at one stroke. We do not promise this. We do not advocate such an impossible task as ending the war by the desire of only one side. It is easy to make promises of this kind, but it is impossible to carry them out. There is no easy way out of this terrible war. Fighting has been going on for three years. You will either go on fighting for ten years or agree to make a difficult and severe revolution. There is no other way out. We say: the war which was started by the capitalist government can be brought to an end only by a workers' revolution.

All over the world a split has occurred in the Socialist ranks. Some are Cabinet ministers; others are in jail. All over the world, one section of the Socialists advocated preparation for war, while another section like the American Bebel—Eugene Debs—who is extremely popular among the American workers, says: "If I were in Congress, I would be shot before I would vote a dollar for such a war. . . . I am opposed to every war but one; I am for that war with heart and soul, and that is the worldwide war of the social revolution." This is how the ranks of the Socialists are split all over the world. The social patriots in all countries think that they are defending their country. They are mistaken; they are defending the interests of one capitalist clique against another. We advocate proletarian revolution—the only true cause for which scores have gone to the scaffold, and hundreds and thousands are in jail. These Socialists in jail are a minority; but behind them is the working class, behind them is economic development. All this tells us that there is no other way out. This war can be brought to an end only by means of a workers' revolution in several countries. Meanwhile, we must prepare for this revolution, help it along. We are told: "Things seem to be asleep in a number of countries. In Germany all the Socialists are unanimously in favor of the war; only Liebknecht is opposed to it." To this I reply: This one Liebknecht represents the working class; in him alone, in his adherents, in the German proletariat, lie the hopes of all. You do not believe it? Continue the war! There is no other road. If you do not believe in Liebknecht, if you do not believe in the workers' revolution, in the revolution that is maturing, if you do not believe this, then believe the capitalists!

Nobody will be victorious in this war except the workers' revolution in several countries. War is not a game; war is a terrible thing; war entails millions of victims, and it cannot be brought to an end so easily.

The soldiers at the front cannot tear the front away from the state and decide things in their own way. The soldiers at the front are part of the country. As long as the state is fighting the front will suffer. There is nothing to be done about it. The war was called forth by the ruling classes; it can be brought to an end only by a working class revolution. The question as to whether you will get a speedy peace will be determined solely by the process of development of the revolution. No matter what sentimental things may be said, no matter how much you may be told: let us put an end to the war immediately, it cannot be done without the development of the revolution. When power passes to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies the capitalists will oppose us: Japan—opposed, France—opposed, England—opposed; the governments of all countries will oppose us. The capitalists will oppose us; but the workers will support us. Then—the war which the capitalists started will come to an end. This is the reply to the question of how to end the war.

V. I. LENIN.

Painting by Sokolov

*Lenin at Rasliv*

[1] M. I. Tereshchenko—Wealthy industrialist, first, minister of finance in the Provisional government, later succeeded Milyukov as minister for foreign affairs.

P. N. Milyukov—founder and leader of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, ideologist of the Russian liberal bourgeoisie. Minister of foreign affairs in the first Provisional government formed after the February revolution in 1917. Actively supported the counter-revolutionary movements after the establishment of the Soviet government and still a leading exponent among the emigres of the policy of foreign intervention against the Soviet Union.

A. I. Konovalov—Wealthy textile manufacturer, minister for trade and industry in the first Provisional government and later vice prime minister in the Kerensky government.

[2] Colonel V. P. Lyakhov—Helped to suppress the revolutionary national movement in the Caucasus after the Revolution of 1905. Participated also in the crushing of the revolution in Tabriz, Persia, in 1906.

[3] Friedrich Adler—One of the leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Austria and secretary of the Second International. Social pacifist during the first imperialist war.

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# The New Deal in Khaki

## Adam Lapin tells how WPA, NYA, CCC are being geared to FDR's war machine. The brass hat advance guard of large scale militarization.

*Washington, D. C.*

SECRETARY ICKES has aroused the Geological Survey, the Land Office, the Bureau of Grazing and other assorted subdivisions of his Department of the Interior from their peaceful slumber. They have all been notified that they must serve the national defense program. Their efforts in this direction are being coordinated through a special intradepartment committee. A meeting of six hundred employees of the Rural Electrification Administration was held the other day "to consider the REA program for the new fiscal year in relation to the broader national effort for preparedness and defense." In a message to the meeting, Secretary of Agriculture Wallace said: "Each one of us must contribute his or her part."

Activities like these might appear a little ludicrous if they were not part of a much bigger and very serious development. All agencies in the government, New Deal or old line, significant or insignificant, are being integrated into the war machine. Their duties and functions are being subordinated to the administration's vast armaments program. In the name of resisting Hitlerism and dictatorship the entire machinery of the government is being militarized to an amazing extent.

Whether the US Housing Authority will get additional funds at this session of Congress is still in doubt. But if it does, there isn't much doubt that the funds will be used in large measure not to cope with the problems of slum areas but to house the expanding armed forces and to provide homes for workers in some of the mushrooming munitions areas. That is the program outlined by the President. Only a few days ago the President approved the expenditure of $2,000,000 for housing projects adjacent to large air bases in Alabama and Florida.

TVA development has long been held up by power trust congressmen, who have bitterly fought every new appropriation, every plan for a new dam that would create new power facilities. But TVA is in for a boom period now. Edward R. Stettinius Jr. himself has put the okay on TVA expansion. New funds will be used, not to provide low cost power for the inhabitants of the Tennessee Valley, but for industries connected with the armaments program.

Priority for all national defense projects is now the official policy of WPA. Applications are pouring in for projects to construct rifle ranges, airports, armories, National Guard camps, and the like. Commissioner Harrington recently announced that the President had in one day approved eleven projects of this kind calling for an expenditure of $2,500,000. Playgrounds and schools are no longer on the order of the day. WPA will play an increasingly important role in the President's war preparedness program. As long ago as last January the Workers Alliance charged that the deterioration of working standards on WPA, the elimination of the prevailing wage, the eighteen-month provision, the active terror in many places against the organization of project workers were making it a forced labor program. The administration may decide that a plentiful supply of forced labor will be needed for its arms program, and that WPA would be the logical source.

Construction work is not the only phase of WPA coordination with the war preparedness machine. Mrs. Florence Kerr, assistant WPA commissioner, painted an amazing picture two weeks ago in a speech at Mitchell, S. D., of the extent to which WPA is being geared for war. Mrs. Kerr is in charge of the white collar and professional projects on WPA. Her speech made it plain that these projects are also being mobilized into the war drive.

> Now what are some of the services that our professional and service projects are prepared to render to our country in an emergency? [Mrs. Kerr asked.] The list is no doubt longer than many of you think. Do you know that we have ten thousand adult education teachers, who could be transferred to literacy classes and classes in "Functions of Government and Americanization"? They are also prepared to give special services to foreign born. Our recreation projects can provide immediate data on recreational facilities and leadership in any section of the country. And we could supply recreational leadership quickly in any concentrated area. . . .
>
> Our housekeeping aide projects could provide day nursery service for children of working mothers. These projects could supply nurses' aides also in large numbers. With a small amount of training by public health departments, housekeeping aides would be equipped to do practical nursing.
>
> We could expand all university research projects having a bearing on military preparation. Record projects—employing 85,000 workers in clerical-type activities—could immediately shift two-thirds of their employment to clerical or fact-finding service directly related to defense preparation. Projects providing tabulating units—each with several hundred trained statistical workers—could be made available in key cities for immediate service on any statistical study needed by agencies dealing with national defense. The WPA ranks here as elsewhere could be refilled and training could go on continuously supplying new workers as they were needed.

By far the most important development, of course, has been the President's plan to regiment American youth in the Hitler style by requiring compulsory government service. The precise details of this plan are not yet known. The outlines are clear enough. Boys between the ages of nineteen and twenty-one would either have to take military training or some form of non-combatant training in connection with the armaments program. In this latter phase of the scheme girls too will find their place at least to some extent. The specter of forced labor and Nazi labor camps looms large over the aspect of the program connected with training workers for the armaments industry. Young people may be put to work in the factories at next to no pay with disastrous effects on the nation's wage structure. The regimentation of the thinking of young people as a result of this program was more than implied by the President.

Three agencies, NYA, CCC, and the Office of Education, are to cooperate in the new program. They will be coordinated at first by Sidney Hillman, and later probably by a joint committee with an over-all administrator. All three are now carrying on activities which will fit into the compulsory service scheme. It is expected that this preliminary phase will be continued and developed until the new program is approved by Congress and takes effect. NYA is rapidly shifting its emphasis toward mechanical training which will be useful in armaments factories. CCC has been planning daily classes in various skills connected with the armaments program.

In the execution of this program there is a bitter factional fight among the various groups involved. White House Secretary Steve Early doesn't like NYA largely because it is one of Mrs. Roosevelt's pets, and when he outlined to reporters the agencies which could carry out the compulsory training program he didn't mention NYA. A group of congressmen who have taken NYA under their wings went to see the President. They were assured that they didn't have to worry about Aubrey Williams' job. But the President added that there is a lot of "fifth column" activity in NYA which makes it unsuitable as the main agency for national defense training.

An important part in this interoffice knife throwing is being played by the army brass hats. They would like to have direct charge of the youth program and hence are extremely perturbed by the announcement that Sidney Hillman will be in charge. The army people are behind the anti-Hillman statements by Rep. E. E. Cox and other congressmen. (Anti-Semitism in army circles and in Congress is also involved in the opposition to Hillman.) The Office of Education, backed by the army, is opposed to NYA because it feels its vocational school program can handle the whole business without any new agencies. Running through this series of jealousies is the thread of rivalry between the old-line agencies and the New Deal agencies as to whether the youth program is to be completely under the

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thumb of the army or whether the New Dealers can horn in.

As the President pointed out to the delegation of congressmen, there is no particular cause for worry about the future of Aubrey Williams or for that matter about the other prominent New Dealers. They will hold their own in the squabbling for prestige and influence. Individuals like Tommy Corcoran will have their ups and downs, but the corps of White House advisers as a whole have had little difficulty in adjusting themselves to new situations. The truth of the matter is that they deserve practically the entire credit for the President's new program. The President feels, needless to say, that the generals have their place too. But he depends on the New Dealers as ideologists, builders of morale, enthusiasm thumpers for the new militarism. Friction between the various groups involved in the administration's war plans will continue. In the final analysis, however, they will work together for the common cause.

Seven years ago it was widely feared on the left that the New Deal was heading toward fascism in its crusade to save a tottering capitalism from collapse. The integration of business and government and the trend toward control of labor were the elements of the administration program which aroused most apprehension at that time. Today this danger has returned in a more acute form, as the President girds the nation to save world capitalism. Five billion dollars for armaments in one year means that the economy is becoming dependent on war orders. It also means the intensive militarization of every phase of American life. The President is moving very fast indeed, so fast that many observers on Capitol Hill feel that he has overreached himself in the last few days. He will have to retreat somewhat in the face of an aroused public sentiment. The President may trim his sails, but he will continue to move toward a setup which will increasingly resemble fascism. Our leading New Dealers will undoubtedly be the advance guard of this new order.

ADAM LAPIN.

A. Jamison

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# We Love Democracy Too Well

**Alvah Bessie, author of "Men in Battle," fought for Spain. He explains the attitude of his comrades toward this war. The real battle and the sham.**

IT DOES not seem to me that I was the only one who thought along those lines. Those were the days on Hill 666 in the Sierra Pandols, a bare and windswept crag that looked down upon Gandesa. Gandesa was the fascist base; the Italian infantrymen were there, and behind them the electric batteries of mountain artillery, and that artillery reached after us on August 19 and August 20, from dawn to dusk. Second by second the shells came over from the plain below, arcing high in parabola and bursting on our parapets, before them, and behind them. You heard the batteries firing, far away, three dull thumps, then there was a pause, and then there was the growing crescendo whistling. The whistle grew louder, rose to a scream, and the shells, one-two-three, burst with a hideous roar that filled the earth and your body that was lying, plastered flat to the earth, trying unconsciously to burrow into it, to escape, or just to cling.

### WE HELD THE HILL

Those were the moments and the hours and the days when we wanted to run—the hundred or so of us—the shattered Lincoln Battalion that had been told to hold that crucial hill. We did not run; we held the hill, and the artillery reached in among us and took many of us away. But not enough of us; not enough to force our retreat. We sang as we lay there; "The Star Spangled Banner" was one of the songs we sang; and we sang the "Internationale"; and we sang other songs too. And they could not blow us off that hill; neither their automatic electric batteries nor the lovely squadrons of heavy bombers that dropped the stuff onto us every hour on the hour and moved in maddening, impersonal patterns across the very blue Spanish sky.

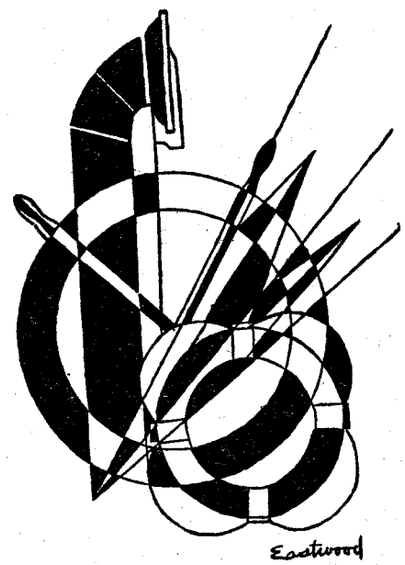
What did we think? I know what *I* thought, and I'm sure I was not alone. This was something I had not foreseen. This was more than I had ever thought it would be, and I had seen my full quota of war pictures. I had read the books, from Arthur Guy Empey's *Over the Top* during the days when my older brother was in the Student Army Training Corps, down through the post-war books, Barbusse's *Under Fire* and Latzko's *Men in War* and Remarque's *All Quiet* and Zweig's *Sergeant Grischa* and Tom Boyd's *Through the Wheat* and Hemingway and all the rest. This was something more than the books could handle; something more than the moving pictures could encompass, even the last picture I had seen before I went to Spain, a jingo picture called *The Road to Glory*.

*That* was a picture! I remembered i[illegible] days on Hill 666 when the artillery cam[illegible] I remember marveling at how well Hollywood had projected the terror of artillery and how real the sound effetcs had been. (Sitting in the theater my hands had perspired.) Lying on that hill so far from home, my whole body streamed and my guts were tied into separate aching knots, and when it was all over for the day I could not stand upon my feet at all. That *was* a picture!

And I thought: they are licking us. They are licking the —— out of us; they have got the stuff over there; and your heart ached when their bombers came over, serene, moving in studied patterns across the sky, and two or three of our pompom guns, our Olikrons, opened up on them from behind us—pop-pop, pop-pop. It broke your heart. For you knew this was happening all over Spain. You knew that slowly, inevitably, the people were being beaten into a pulp; just such a pulp as you could see if you shifted your eyes from where you were lying to a spot a few feet away where the shell had landed. You'd bummed a cigarette from him that morning. "I got a pack from home today," he said, smiling. "Have a smoke; it may be the last you'll get. Don't save the butt."

### THE BETRAYERS

They were being beaten and trampled to the earth they had tried so hard to defend: by Hitler's airplanes; by Mussolini's automatic electric batteries (they were wonderful); by the stinking reactionary French government that held *our* airplanes and the artillery and the munitions, the supplies, everything we needed, in warehouses on the other side of the border. They were being beaten by Mr. Chamberlain and by Mr. Roosevelt, by Sir Samuel Hoare and by Mr. Eden; by the refusal of our own great country, from which we had had to escape like criminals to cross the sea, to lift its embargo on Spain.



Eastwood

And who was defending them? A handful of foreign men with a few rifles and machine guns; a nation of Spanish people themselves, with rifles and machine guns and a few airplanes—sent by the Soviet Union. We knew the Soviet Union was helping; we held that help in our hands; we cherished it; we slept with it as a man sleeps with a woman, holding the rifle, the machine gun in our arms. We knew those days that the Soviet Union was trying to form a front against fascist aggression; and later we learned how it had failed. And we knew whose fault it was that that front was never formed, for we never had any British rifles to fire, and we never had any French machine guns to defend us, and there were no American airplanes overhead, the fine Curtiss P-36A's we had seen back home, or the Grummans or the Vultees or the Martin bombers or the Boeing fighters.

So they did the job they had agreed to do —the British and the French, who were the villains from the start. The Blums (the "Socialist"!) who engineered "non-intervention," and the Daladiers and the Attlees. (There used to be a company in the British Battalion of the 15th International Brigade named after Major Attlee; but that was a long time ago.) They were the boys who did the job—who established the "neutrality patrols" in the Mediterranean and on the borders, where Germans and Italians saw to it that no German or Italian arms or men came into Spain! And they were the boys—the Chamberlains, the Daladiers—who finished up the job in the days when those of us who were lucky enough to escape with a whole skin had come home, and sat here impotent to help while Franco's Italians marched on Barcelona, and in Madrid the old Miaja was induced by British agents to throw in the sponge, and the city (that had never let them pass) was handed over to Besteiro and Casado, who handed it in turn to General Franco. We knew who had done it; we knew who had handed Austria to Hitler, and Czechoslovakia, and Poland, and Denmark and Norway, and we saw how Hitler, swollen with what had been handed him, escaped his borders and gave the French and British a chance to reap the whirlwind which they themselves had sown.

### WE WERE RIGHT

So we were not confused, any more than we were confused by the artillery that smashed the men and the stone on Hill 666 that

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August. And I do not think we are confused today. For in those days when they were licking us we sat and chewed the fat; we sat and griped about the food, that grew scarcer every day, and the lack of cigarettes and the stoppage of the mail and the lack of good replacements and the lack of airplanes and artillery, of anti-aircraft to keep the Fiats and the Junkers and the Messerschmidts away. And we said, "What the hell; if they lick us here, what sort of a world is it going to be?" We said, "If the people of the world, the people who are helping us, the *working* people who contribute their pennies and their nickels and their dimes—if they can't force their governments to help us, to send us planes as well as cigarettes, artillery as well as chocolate bars—well then, we're in for a lifetime of war; we'll get home in time to be drafted into the American army to fight a different sort of war." And were we wrong? (Though I doubt that they will want us in this army; they know we love democracy too much.)

For we are trained soldiers now; we know how a shell sounds coming from the automatic batteries, soaring in its lovely invisible parabola through the air, impersonal and timed by mathematics. We know how the people of Poland felt when the Heinkels and the Junkers came over and dropped their load, and the Messerschmidts hunted them across the fields. We know how the people trudging down the roads in Holland and in Belgium and in France and Norway feel these days, for we saw their faces in Spain—we saw them moving with automatic feet down the dusty roads, their children clinging to them, their beds upon their backs. And we are not quite so afraid of war as we were before we went to Spain; we were never afraid to fight then, and we would not be afraid to fight again, if we had something to fight *for*. A good soldier stands a chance to come through; a good soldier knows how to protect himself against all reasonable odds; and if the Italian artillery and the German bombers could not terrify us then, it is doubtful they could terrify us now.

But we veterans will not go to fight in this war. There was a man whose name we proudly bore, and he said something about fooling all the people all the time; and he said something about the strongest bond of all, the bond that binds working people of all lands. If we never loved that man before, we learned to love him there in Spain, and we felt his great heart beating in that foreign land. But *his* heart is not beating in Washington these days. There is a different heart beating there these days, and the men in Washington and elsewhere are preparing us and exhorting us and rushing us into a war to defend "democracy" against the Hitler terror. (You cannot fool us about the Hitler terror; we have seen it and felt it in our flesh.) They are trying to utilize the people's virulent hatred of Hitler's and Mussolini's fascism to defend and preserve and extend their own peculiar brand of fascism—the American brand, and the British brand, and the French brand, and Huey Long said a mouthful when he told us that fascism would come to us disguised as anti-fascism.

WHERE WERE THEY?

And where were these people when real democracy was being strangled in Spain? Did they raise the outcry they have raised over little Belgium or little Finland or little Norway or little France or little England? Did Hoover and the other fat guys and gals yell like bloody murder over Spain? And do they (did they) hear the Spanish and the German and Italian and the French democrats and anti-fascists in the French and British concentration camps? Do they hear when the Indian multitudes cry out for freedom, the Chinese millions, the people in Ireland, in French Morocco or the Congo? Do they heed the cry of the millions inside their own borders, who need not be fed any more than they are being fed today, for tomorrow they will die in battle? Shall we defend the British "way of life" that has Mr. Vincent Sheean so deep-enamored; the French "civilization" that has destroyed the French Revolution and the Popular Front; the American Way that is battering at the original aims of the New Deal and the Wagner act and the Wages-and-Hours law and the trade unions, and make the world safe again for the "gracious way of living" of the vast minority?

By their fruits shall ye know them, it is said. And we said, and we knew, and we *know* that the cause of Spain was the cause of all advanced and progressive mankind. And don't think *they* didn't know it too—that's why they killed it! So I do not think that they will want our help in fastening those chains upon the world that they fastened (for the moment) upon Spain.

But I *know* they would not get it if they wanted it.

ALVAH BESSIE.

## Use That Other Nostril!

"BUT I say that Benito Mussolini will rue the day that he casts his lot with one [Hitler] who viciously attacks everything which civilization holds dear in the world today. . . . He knows that the flowering culture of Roman civilization, which he has tried to bring back to consciousness and to life, to throb through the civilized world—he knows that every one of the fine sentiments he cherishes will be crushed in the iron fist of Hitlerism as soon as Hitler's nasty job is partially finished."—*Senator Pepper of Florida, on the floor of the Senate, June 3.*

## He's Their Man Now

THE Class Day Committee of the Harvard Alumni Association has decreed that participants in the Class Day parade this year must not carry signs (such as many of them have in years past) ridiculing or damning That Man in the White House.

## "Economy" Boys on a Spree

WHAT has happened to the "economy" boys, the editorial thunderers against government spending? A few months ago they hurled their bolts every time Congress proposed a $100 appropriation. But now: a billion or so goes through every week—for "defense"—and they cry, "More!" Their idea of dictatorship has changed too. Once it meant just about every government agency, beginning with the National Labor Relations Board. It's different when the government sets up a war industries board; that's the sort of "dictation" that the boys have been begging for.

It just goes to show what *la guerre* means to industrial coffers. Peacetime spending nets them little compared with what they'll get from the government gravy poured out in wartime—particularly under the direction of an industries board. The last war is proof enough of that. In 1913-18 du Pont multiplied its assets over 400 percent; during one year it declared a dividend of over 400 percent of the par value of its stock. Standard Oil of Indiana increased its profits over 650 percent in 1914-18. During the single year of 1918 all Standard Oil companies made profits totaling over half a billion dollars. The rate of profit for the Calumet & Hecla Co. (mining) was 800 percent in 1918. Corporation profits during the five year war and post-war period (1916-21) came to nearly $40,000,000,000—an average profit of $8,000,000,000 a year.

Skyrocketing prices partly accounted for this. There was also the enormous graft resulting from big business' direct control of government. The "dollar a year" men multiplied their patriotic little salary by millions; they simply put themselves or their friends in charge of purchasing commissions that bought from their own industries. Copper, which cost 12 cents a pound to produce, was sold the government for 24 cents; Bernard Baruch had loaded the copper purchasing committee with representatives of the copper industry. This was just one instance of the arrogant greed that the post-war Graham congressional committee turned up in its investigation of war expenditures.

True, wages went up also—but the cost of food increased 97 percent; house furnishings 90 percent; textile products, 150; building materials, 115. In other words, workers had to pay so much more for what they bought that the purchasing power of their income dropped sharply below the level of pre-war years.

Only one ugly memory now crosses the industrialists' dream of Mars. That is the collapses which resulted from the last war in 1921 and 1929. They're having a wonderful time now "expanding" to meet the war market. But what will they do with those great big factories and investments after the war, when the market drops out of sight, when unemployment rises, when the whole economy is yanked out of joint? After the war spree comes the hangover.

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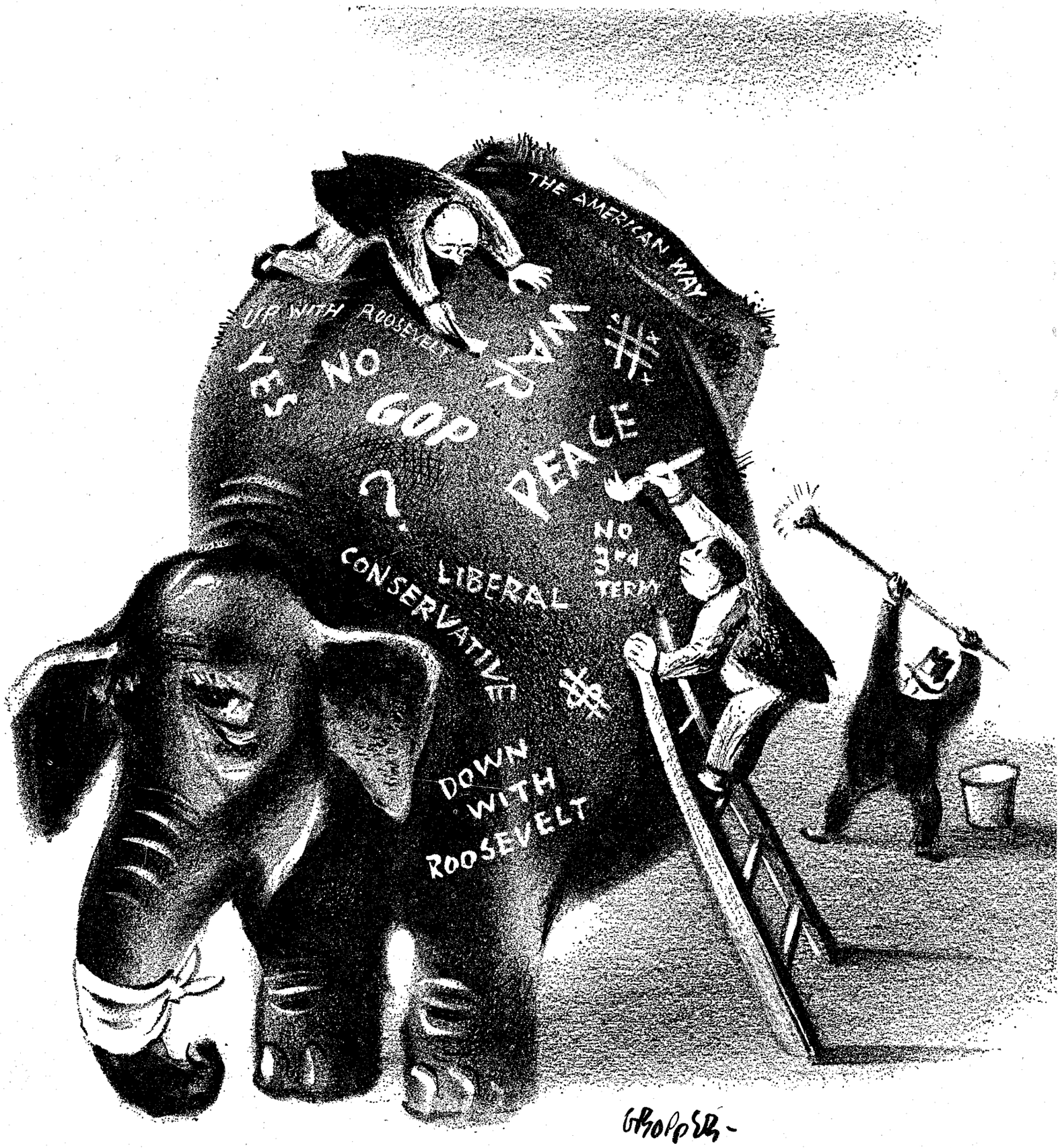


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# True Allies for Peace

## The need for cooperation by the working and middle classes against imperialism. James W. Ford reviews the experience of the Negro people and the peoples of Mexico, Spain, and France.

The following address by James W. Ford, vice presidential candidate of the Communist Party, was delivered at a meeting sponsored by NEW MASSES on June 12 on the subject of "The Middle Class and the War." A talk on the same occasion by Earl Browder, the Communist Party's presidential candidate, was published in these pages last week.—THE EDITORS.

IT IS a very great pleasure to address this meeting of the NEW MASSES arranged for the purpose of bringing a message to the middle classes on the imperialist war, and the dangers to their way of life and that of the working class if the warmongers in the United States have their way and draw our country into the war.

A few days ago President Roosevelt in a loud war whoop all but declared war. If the United States is drawn into this war our country would be set back for generations. A general analysis of the war already shows that the economic situation tends to worsen, and with it the conditions of life and work of manual and brain workers, and particularly those of the middle classes. The perspective is that national economy will obtain no lasting security from the war.

It is obvious to every American that civil liberties too are feeling heavy blows from reactionary circles in the midst of the war hysteria. And here too the middle class has much to lose, much to fight for. With whom should it fight and against whom?

It seems to me that the most immediate task facing the middle classes is to struggle with all their might against the traitorous American bourgeoisie which is moving heaven and hell to put this country into the imperialist war. It seems to me that it is necessary to fight for the defense of the country against that enemy who is betraying the real security of the nation by attacking the well-being of the working and toiling population.

### THE NATURE OF THE WAR

The international situation is characterized at the moment by the fact that the nature of the war in Europe is clear and aboveboard. In the beginning of the war many sincere democrats and progressive middle class circles were mistaken about the nature of the war. Why? Because there was not a clear understanding on their part of the system that makes wars possible and of their relationship with the proletariat which has no interest in the unjust wars of capitalist imperialism and which alone can stop war. The imperialists tried to make believe that the war was for democracy against fascism. Let us examine this claim only briefly.

In all of the so-called democratic countries the power was in the hands of the most reactionary strata of the bourgeoisie which exercised against the working class and the people in general methods of domination and terror: illegalizing the Communist parties, imprisonment of their leaders, prohibition of their press, suppression of the trade union organizations and their democratic rights, suppression of all the conquests obtained by the working class; wage reductions, increased hours of work, and concentration of power in the hands of the militarists. And our ruling circles have rapidly followed the same course.

Now what relationship does the middle class bear to the proletariat in its struggle against the forces that make wars?

This is an historical question. I have had an unusual experience during the last six months of having the privilege of studying certain aspects of this question in Mexico. I was required to study certain developments of the past where the role of the middle classes, that is, the petty bourgeoisie, as in Mexico, had considerable bearings.

The great French Revolution of 1789 was headed by the big bourgeoisie with middle classes, artisans, and sections of the workers. The big bourgeoisie had the power. They were terribly afraid of the workers and reached agreements with the feudalists against them. The workers were never allowed to play a leading role in the revolution.

Later the petty bourgeoisie took the power and developed a popular movement. They killed the king and confiscated the land and property of the bourgeoisie. The result was French bourgeois democracy that came down to our times. French bourgeois democracy was progressive. But today the people of France can vision liberation only in the working class, which alone can unite the French people including the middle classes, and lead them to final and complete victory, for the well-being and security of the nation, for socialism.

In Spain in 1931 the monarchy fell. Land was confiscated from the nobility and the clergy. There was no strong proletarian party. In 1936 the Spanish people achieved victory at the polls under the leadership of political parties of the middle classes and petty bourgeoisie, and the Social Democratic Party. This was to the liking of the bourgeoisie and counter-revolution which staked its bets on the vacillation of the petty bourgeois parties. Reaction struck at the liberty of the Spanish people.

### A PEOPLE'S WAR

The working class together with the Spanish people took the path of armed resistance against counter-revolution. That struggle is one of the outstanding events in recent international history. But the various parties that controlled the Spanish people's governments were petty bourgeois and influenced by petty bourgeois ideology which, along with other influences such as non-intervention and betrayal by social democracy, was the immediate cause of the defeat of the republic. The requirement necessary, as the only guarantee of success of the Spanish republic, was the leading role of the working class. The only party that fought against great odds for the alliance of the working class with the peasantry and the middle classes for the unity of all these forces was the Communist Party.

Let me give you the example of Mexico. For three decades the Mexican people have engaged in a great liberal struggle, fighting a many-sided battle for democracy against internal feudal reaction and for the independence of their country from foreign imperialist domination. During these thirty years of struggle and sacrifice the enthusiasm of the workers and peasants never lagged—the working class fought to assume its leading role; the peasants conducted themselves in the spirit of the great peasant leader, Zapata. The Indian nationalities, who constitute one-third of the population and who have resisted through centuries all kinds of attacks to destroy them, are taking their place in the modern progressive movement of the entire Mexican people.

The rising liberal bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie are fighting for their interests and position in the bourgeois democratic movement. The middle classes and petty bourgeoisie occupy a very strategic position in Mexico's struggle for freedom.

The people's movement of Mexico is democratic and progressive throughout. Mexico is a dependent country, held back by imperialism. It is essentially agrarian. The countryside is yet to a great extent dominated by a reactionary feudal bourgeoisie which is tied to the foreign imperialists. These aspects of economic control and political domination have held back democratic forms, limited the industrial development of the country, and stalled the growth of the proletariat. The Indian people are retarded and oppressed by the weight of imperialism and feudalism. The Mexican people therefore are struggling for democracy, agrarian reforms, habilitation of industry, liberation of the Indians, for national liberation, peace, and against involvement of the country in the imperialist war.

During the current six years they have fought especially hard to maintain long desired and hard-won economic, social, and political rights. This struggle is now being conducted under the conditions of the imperialist war, the abandonment of the Roosevelt Good Neighbor policy and American imperialism's hardboiled dollar diplomacy penetration of Latin America. The struggle of the Mexican people is one of the outstanding developments

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in the western hemisphere, since Mexico is spearhead of American monopoly capital's drive into Latin America.

What social forces have headed the Mexican revolution?

THE MEXICAN SCENE

General Cardenas was elected president in 1934. His successful election brought to power the liberal bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, consisting mainly of the urban middle classes. This combination of forces began to advance the Mexican revolution. The power of reaction was broken under the pressure of the awakened masses. Cardenas began to bring some benefits to the workers and peasants. He opened the doors for capitalist forms of development which gave rise to a liberal bourgeoisie and the influence of the petty bourgeoisie. Forty million hectares of land were distributed to the peasants. Trade union organization was allowed. The most significant anti-imperialist action of President Cardenas was the expropriation of the foreign oil properties, which received the full and enthusiastic support of the entire Mexican people. The foreign oil owners have held back the national, economic, and industrial development of the country.

But the revolutionary upsurge was under the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie and liberal bourgeoisie. It was not under the leadership or direction of the proletariat. *This is the key to an understanding of the situation in Mexico.*

It is erroneous, even in the remotest sense, to say that what is taking place or has been taking place in Mexico is a revolution bordering on socialism or Communism. The imperialists and their agents make this charge as an excuse for attacking the progressive and democratic gains of the Mexican revolution.

It is true that the workers and peasants brought their pressure to bear upon these developments. But President Cardenas did not initiate the demands of the toilers. The petty bourgeoisie and the liberal bourgeoisie acted under the pressure of the popular movement. They were pressed forward by the proletariat. So long as President Cardenas and the forces around him reacted to the pressure of the workers and peasants he satisfied certain demands of the people as a whole. But this was done only in order to hold the revolution in the hands of middle class and liberal bourgeoisie and to prevent the spontaneous action of the workers and peasants below and their assuming hegemony in the movement.

From the viewpoint of a continuous and consistent struggle for the complete liberation of the country, that is the reverse of the way things ought to be in Mexico. That is why the present Mexican situation is fraught with such danger that the gains of the revolution may be set back.

A counter-revolutionary uprising is being organized by Yankee imperialism to liquidate the gains of the revolution. Behind these plans for the uprising are the worst enemies of the Mexican people and of the labor and progressive forces in the United States. Among those forces acting for the most reactionary circles of the United States is Rep. Martin Dies.

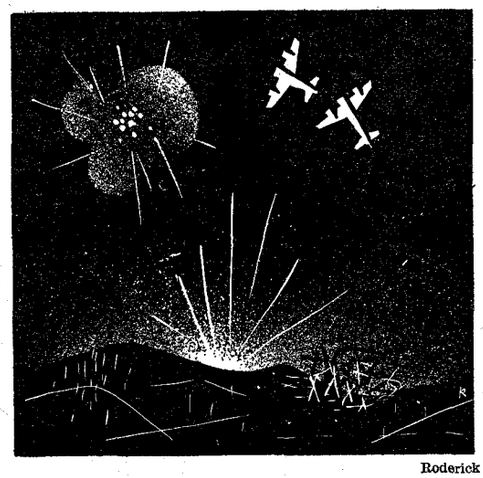
Only the working class can lead the Mexican people in a successful struggle against Yankee imperialism, which, together with internal Mexican reaction, aims to destroy all the gains of the Mexican revolution. In this situation the petty bourgeoisie and liberal bourgeoisie forces may give in to imperialism.

NEW LEADERSHIP

The situation is all the more serious because in the recent past the Communist Party of Mexico has not occupied its leading position as the vanguard of the Mexican proletariat, leading it and rallying around it all the progressive forces committed to a program of advancing the revolution. The leadership of the Communist Party, which was considerably under the influence of petty bourgeois ideology, had allowed the party to become tied to the bourgeoisie. The party was an appendage of the Cardenas government. Its line was distorted and the direction of the proletariat and peasantry was disorientated (even to the detriment of the middle classes) which prevented the workers from assuming their leading role in the bourgeois democratic movement, as the only guarantee that this movement would develop the people's front movement against imperialism and reaction.

The saving grace, if time is not too short, in the present situation is that the Communist Party of Mexico has a new leadership. In an Extraordinary Congress held in March those elements that held back the party were eliminated and the entire membership was reorientated toward advancing the leading role of the working class. Basing itself on the workers, peasants, Indian masses, and the popular progressive middle class forces, as the main basis of the revolution, the congress endorsed a program to head the struggles of the masses and to create consciousness in the proletariat so as to place it at the head of the Mexican masses in order to make the revolution move forward toward a powerful people's front, toward a people's front government.

Let me now give my final example: the role of the middle class and proletariat in the Negro people's movement.



Roderick

Yesterday the press reported the death of Marcus Garvey. Marcus Garvey in his prime was a powerful figure in the strivings of the Negro people. Mr. Garvey came upon the scene in the aftermath of the first imperialist war. He died at the height of the second imperialist war, a war that—like the first imperialist war—finds the Negro people seeking a way out of imperialist oppression.

Today two great imperialist forces, Italo-German and Anglo-French, are locked in a titanic death struggle to determine, in part, which one of them shall continue the age-old oppression and exploitation of Negro peoples. The Negro people need not contemplate which side wins. It is not a question for the Negro people *which side wins.* On neither side of this struggle is their bread buttered. Rather the issue is (and it begins to arise larger on the horizon) the fight for liberty and freedom from imperialism.

At this moment in the second imperialist war there are rumblings of revolt among the Ethiopian people. Such a revolt must inevitably be in the making. It will be a part of the proletarian revolutionary forces the world over, with the peoples of China, India, and Latin America finding their way out of capitalist imperialist war and oppression. Mr. Garvey did not understand the nature of this struggle of the Ethiopian people.

THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE

The Ethiopian people are on neither side of the present imperialist conflict, neither on the side of fascist Italy nor on the side of imperialist Britain and France. Their fight as it looms up is a struggle for liberation and freedom *from all imperialism,* and has the possibilities of opening up that struggle for all the peoples of Africa.

Now in the backwash of the first imperialist war Marcus Garvey visioned a Negro empire in the conditions of imperialism, on the pattern of imperialism. Mr. Garvey did not understand the nature of the Negro people's struggle against imperialism. That was indeed unfortunate because he was a powerful figure and leader.

During the last war Negro people everywhere and particularly in the United States reached a high degree of understanding of their struggles as a struggle against imperialism. That was because the Negro working class began to emerge as a result of the war. It grew in consciousness of its class position. But it was held back in organization and understanding by the Jim Crow policies of the reformist bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor.

The Negro farmers who moved from farm peonage in the South and those who remained there began to move against national oppression and the denial of their land rights and social and civil inequalities. Those who left migrated to the great urban industrial centers of the North where in contact with the working class and urban conditions they advanced further in their understanding of capitalist imperialist exploitation.

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The Negro middle classes, which had held the leadership of the Negro masses, fast lost ground because even the aspirations and desires of these classes were not being satisfied by middle class waverings and weaknesses in the face of imperialist oppression of the entire Negro people. Similarly in the Negro colonies there were somewhat the same developments. These were the forces that made up the great movement that Marcus Garvey headed.

In this situation Marcus Garvey was thrown up. He organized the powerful Universal Negro Improvement Association, known as the UNIA. The Garvey movement had an all-embracing character—liberation of the Negroes of the world under the slogan, "Back to Africa." *The UNIA under Garvey's leadership endeavored to solve by reformist petty bourgeois, middle class methods, based on "race,"* the most important and burning problems of the Negro people which had come about as a result of the Civil War, and which had been magnified tenfold by modern imperialism.

Mr. Garvey did not understand the relation of forces among the Negro people; neither did he understand the meaning of imperialism and particularly American imperialism in relation to the Negro people. He showed little understanding of the working class, its rise and organization, and its relationship to the problems of the Negro people. This was because of the weight of middle class and petty bourgeois influences on him and the movement.

### GARVEY'S FALLACY

The fundamental fallacy of Garveyism lay in the fact that national struggles of the oppressed nation cannot succeed in the period of imperialism except through a joint struggle of all the oppressed and exploited forces in society led by the working class. That is why Garvey and certain of his followers allowed themselves at the height of the struggle of the Ethiopian people to become aides of the pro-fascist Chamberlain clique in Great Britain.

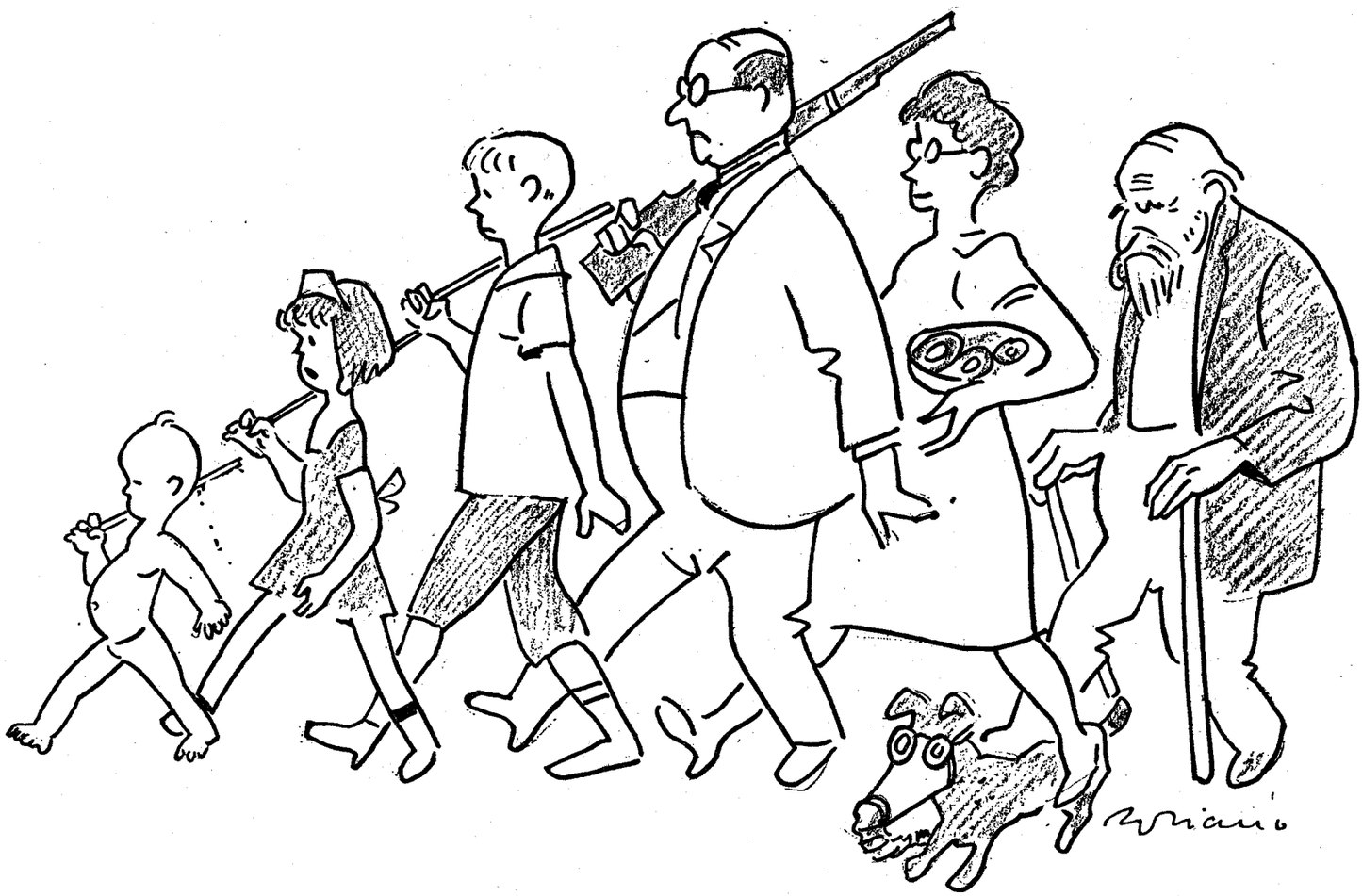
Mr. Garvey could not or did not vision the rise of such a movement in the labor field as the CIO. The historic significance of the CIO was recently signalized in the concrete agreement of collaboration between the National Negro Congress and the CIO.

Those, however, who try to slander Mr. Garvey do it to try to stifle the latent powers of the Negro people's struggle for freedom. Mr. Garvey was not all good, nor was he all bad. Despite his shortcomings he had great courage and tenacity. He is to be honored for the best of his qualities and sincere desires regarding Negro freedom.

The Communist Party, from its very inception, and its leaders tried again and again to influence the Garvey movement along a correct line. Representatives of the Communist Party appeared at the Detroit convention of the UNIA and also at the great convention in New York in 1924. The Communist Party conceived as the two most detrimental influences to the development of that movement the presence of white chauvinism (race prejudice) among sections of the white working class and tendencies toward petty bourgeois (middle class) nationalism among the Negroes.

The Communist Party had formulated as one of its basic principles the: ". . . abolition of all exploitation of man by man, nation by nation, and race by race and . . . the abolition of race and class divisions in society." This concept arose from the great teachings of Karl Marx—workers in the white skin cannot free themselves so long as workers in the black skin are branded. The Communist Party in its approach to Negro liberation is guided by the great teachings of Lenin and Stalin on the national question and the solution of the problems of nationalities in the Soviet Union. The Communist Party can point with pride to its role in the modern liberation movement of the Negro people which is rising on the background of the Garvey movement and the imperialist oppression of the Negroes everywhere.

JAMES W. FORD.




*If the Brass Hats Have Their Way*

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# The Birthmark

**The police insisted it was an auto accident. But Matt and Clara called it something else. A short story by Ralph Ellison.**

THE summer heat struck them in a wave as they stepped from the car into the highway. Matt and Clara stood quietly, watching the highway patrolman pull his huge body from beneath the steering wheel. Matt turned and saw the other white man, the coroner, looking out across the green stretch of field fringed with pine trees, where two large birds circled slowly, black shapes against the still, blue air.

"Them damned buzzards," the white man said.

"Well, let's git going," the patrolman said.

Clara sighed, her broken face torn with anguish. "Oh God," she said softly. The white men looked on, silently.

When the white men turned to go, Matt tried to pull her aside. But she stood firm. The patrolman looked impatient. Matt gripped her arm. She shook her head.

"Then try to be brave, Clara," he whispered.

They started behind the men, across the heat-simmering concrete to the bushes which lined the highway. They had walked a few steps when the small white man turned and faced them.

"You better send your woman back to the car," he said. "It ain't gonna be so nice."

"Yes suh," Matt said.

He looked at Clara; maybe now she would go back, this was nothing for a woman to see.

"Yeah, Clara, you better go on back. If it's Willie, I'll tell you," he said.

He watched her face set resolutely as she wiped sweat from her forehead. Sun gleamed on her straightened hair. Matt knew she would refuse before she spoke.

"I got to know for myself, Matt," she said, "I'll be all right."

The white men exchanged glances as Matt tried gently to push her away. She stood her ground.

"Ain't no use trying to make me go, Matt. I got to know, I got to know for myself."

Matt swallowed hard and dropped his arm from her shoulders. It was no use, nothing could make Clara leave.

"Well, let's git going," the coroner said. "I got to go back to town."

The patrolman hitched his brass-studded gun belt and grunted as he led the way. They went down an embankment into the bushes. As he went through, Matt caught a glimpse of the body. Drawing closer, he saw it was covered with newspapers. It lay in a clearing beneath the trees, upon the pine needle covered ground. "Lord, don't let it be Willie, Lord," Matt thought. He helped Clara along, his arm firmly around her shoulders. When they reached the body, the white men hesitated, as though they expected him to say something. He looked at the newspaper-covered mound and was seized with a feeling like fear. The very thought that it might be Willie under those colored comic sheets was almost more than he could bear. He looked at Clara standing tense beside him and longed to carry her back to the car and go home and wait for Willie to come in laughing and teasing them for thinking it could have been him. How could Willie let a *car* hit him?

Someone stirred; the white men were waiting. He looked at the body, seeing where blood had oozed from beneath the papers and was drying upon the ground. An insect droned. The pungent odor of pine hung in the heat.

Suddenly he felt Clara sag against him. For a moment he thought she was about to faint. "Oh God," she whispered.

"You better go back, Clara. Go on back to the car."

"Naw, Matt. Please, I'm all right."

"But maybe it's a mistake. . . ."

"Matt, I got to see," she said.

The coroner stood with hands in pockets, waiting. The patrolman traced a line near the body with the toe of his boot, making a small furrow in the earth. Matt turned and looked pleadingly at Clara. He begged her with his eyes to leave, to go back to the car. He did not want these white folks to see her in sorrow. Then without a word the patrolman bent and swept the newspapers from the body, leaving only its middle covered. Matt closed his eyes as the man drew erect. It seemed hours before he could force himself to look. The body was hunched on one side, lying bare upon straw-colored pine needles, the long legs bare. He saw the jaw hanging limply against the shoulder, the mouth gaping. Goddam, was this Willie?

A blood-creased cut started under the ear and disappeared beneath the chin.

Matt felt as though he would empty himself. He struggled, trying to make his mind reject the impressions it insisted upon recording. It cain't be Willie, he told himself. The flesh was hacked and pounded as though it had been beaten with hammers. Worse than a stuck hog, he thought. He wanted to turn away, but he knew he had to look. He *had* to.

Suddenly he became aware of Clara. . . .

"That him?" a voice said.

He looked up. It was the coroner. Yes, that was it, he thought. Is it Willie? He was silent, looking. Where is the birthmark—but it ain't him, it *cain't* be him, he thought. Lord! The mark had been just below Willie's navel. Funny he'd remember that now, he hadn't seen it for years, not since Willie had been a kid. But nothing to do but look. He stepped in front of Clara to keep her from seeing as he steeled himself and bent to lift the last sheet of paper. Suddenly there was a swift movement. Clara screamed. A blow landed on his shoulder. He stumbled backward and pulled quickly erect, his face blank with surprise. Pain knifed into his collar bone. He saw the patrolman get set to strike again. He stepped backward and threw up his arm. This man gone crazy?

"What you do that to him for, man?" Clara said.

Matt groped for her to keep her quiet as he studied the white man's face.

"We didn't tell you to do that, nigger," the man said.

"Aw leave him alone, Turp. It don't make no difference," the coroner said. "Let him look."

Matt was dazed. He did not know what to do next and the patrolman's fingers played near his gun butt.

"I was just looking for his birthmark, suh," he said finally.

"It don't make no difference, Turp," the coroner said. "Let the boy look."

"Okay, but I don't like it," the patrolman said. Matt looked at the coroner and saw the white man bow his head.

"It all right suh?"

"Sure, go on. You can look."

"Thank you suh."

When Matt lowered his eyes he noticed the ribs had been caved in. The flesh was bruised and torn. It was just below his navel, he thought. Then he gave a start: where it should have been was only a bloody mound of torn flesh and hair. Matt went weak. He felt as though he had been castrated himself. He thought he would fall when Clara stepped up beside him. Swiftly, he tried to push her back, thinking to keep her from seeing. Then Clara was screaming.

"Leave me go, leave me go!"

He felt himself reel as she pushed against him. Her voice shrilled in his ears. He watched her face, fascinated.

"I want to see," she screamed. "I want to see so I'll remember, Matt. These here white folks come and told us Willie was hit by a car, but didn't no car do that to him. They lynched Willie, Matt. They done lynched our brother . . ."

Matt was in a panic. He grabbed at Clara to clamp his hand over her mouth. He would have to get her away, quick.

"Naw, Matt. I know what I'm saying. I ain't gonna be the same after this, Matt, and I want to see it all so's I'll never forget why . . ."

"Shut up, Clara, hush . . ."

"They asked us last month to sign a piece of paper saying we wanted things like this to stop and you was afraid. Now look at my brother, he's laying there looking like something ain't even human. And these white

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folks talking 'bout a car hit him. He was lynched, Lynched! I'm gonna tell everybody, HE WAS LYNCHED!"

Matt felt a tremor shake her body and she swayed against him. As he tried to support her, he felt himself being snatched roughly around. The patrolman's red face was six inches from his own, glaring.

"Nigger, we told you that boy was hit by a car, understand?"

"But mister, don't no car do nothing like that—"

Matt tried to dodge as he saw the gun barrel flash in the sun. The blow glanced off the side of his skull, leaving a trail of pain. He tried to see the coroner but colors stabbed his eyes. He sank to his knees.

*"Goddammit, I said a car hit him!"* the white man snapped. *"We don't have no lynchings in this state no more!"*

*"You lynched him, you know you lynched him,"* Clara shrilled.

*"Shut up, you black bitch!"*

*"You lynched him, yes you lynched him!"*

He heard Clara's screams and tried to rise and the white man was cursing and someone was pulling on his arm.

"Git up from there, nigger, and shut this bitch up!"

He stumbled to his feet, his head slowly clearing.

"You did it, you know you did it, lynched my baby brother. And now you trying to kill Matt. Aaaw Lord . . ."

Clara's voice died away to a moan as Matt steadied himself. He pulled her head against his shoulder, muffling her voice as he watched the white men. The coroner looked uncomfortable.

"He's telling you right, boy," the coroner said, "he was hit by a car. Feller saw him laying longside the road and called us."

"And you better remember that, nigger," the patrolman said. "And your sister better remember that, too. 'Cause a car might hit *you*. Understand what I mean?"

Matt was silent, he did not understand. The whole side of his head ached. *If he only didn't have that gun. . . .*

"Nigger, I said, do you understand?"

"I understand, suh," he said.

"Now git on back to town and send somebody after the body."

"Yes suh."

Matt pushed Clara to go, feeling hot breath against the hand he held over her mouth. "Come on, Clara."

"Just remember that a car hit 'im, and you'll be all right," the patrolman said. "We don't allow no lynching round here no more."

Matt felt Clara's fingers digging into his arm as his eyes flashed swiftly over the face of the towering patrolman, over the badge against the blue shirt, the fingers crooked in the belt above the gun butt. He swallowed hard and pulled Clara tightly to him, catching sight of Willie between the white men's legs.

"I'll remember," he said bitterly, "he was hit by a car."

RALPH ELLISON.

## Is That You, America?

NOTE on the "peculiarly American" character of Republican and Democratic conventions as described by Delbert Clark in the New York *Times Magazine*, Sunday, June 23:

The delegates themselves are average Americans "in conclave assembled." From the moment they arrive to the last frenzied march around the hall for the nominee, the convention is peculiarly American.

They take over the town, they relax from their serious labors in such conviviality as the place affords, they sleep as little as possible, and strive to the utmost to maintain a circus atmosphere in what is actually a very serious business.

It is perhaps the very backstairs manipulation or behind-the-scenes logrolling among candidates' managers which is the most distinctively native manifestation of all.

# The Enemy

The enemy is rich in houses but his spirit
lives in the slums of history.

His pride is arsenals, he expresses himself
with bayonets in the hands of others.

He conquers by telephone to the outposts,
he dines in the spoiled lands.

The enemy is an organizer of war supplies,
of military roads by forced labor.

His paid pilots are elegant and deadly
over backward peoples.

He has admirals in his family; they amuse
diplomats in mined harbors.

The enemy is magnificent in destruction;
he cannot mortise one timber

Lastingly on another. He is geared for
explosions;

He cannot open and search the earth,
nor the night

And its lighted systems, nor the frontier
of any man's mind.

He understands the logic of loud campaigns,
he thinks in squadrons.

He is precise now only in armies, he has
a mathematical plan for chaos.

The enemy has come again into the disorder
of drowning men:

He can command these deaths but he cannot
stop the mouths

Of the dying, he is finally exposed in
the eyes of the witnesses.

We need to bear life; to bury the normal
corpse; to notice the sun.

We want tomorrow to be constant, to see
plain houses built,

Land planted by season, and metals made
useful in the cities.

*Bring the stretchers! Open the windows*
*of the psychopathic ward!*

*Take out the advanced cases! Let air pour*
*in upon paranoia in our time!*

*What we want is order: we will have it.*

DON GORDON.

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# No Draft Day for Youth

## The young men of New York have much to say about labor camps and army service. They prefer jobs and peace to bayonet drill.

THAT morning at breakfast we read about the conscription bill, Dick and I. He was busy with the sports page while I was plowing through the seven-point single column of the *Times*. I said nothing to him later as we crossed the bridge to St. Nicholas Avenue. We boarded a No. 3 bus in the cool, clear June morning and I asked the conductor for transfers. A few minutes later we, Dick and I, stood on the pavement at 168th Street and Broadway. Dick was staring across the street at the aggressive figure in bronze, the soldier of 1918, whose effigy stands on a pedestal above the long scroll of names of those who died to make the world safe for democracy.

Back of the towering buildings of the Medical Center the long, low armory lies. "Over there," I said, "is where I registered for the draft."

"I thought you enlisted," my son said. He is sixteen, tall, with fine, firm-muscled arms and a broad chest.

"Everyone had to register. I was serial No. 892,641," I told him. "I joined up before my number was called." And 1917 returned to mind: the publication of the selective service regulations, the letter, my visit to the armory, the same armory around the corner from where we now stood. And then the weeks which followed: the worry, my mother's letters, her illness, and my decision to enlist.

The Riverside bus swung down upper Broadway to the drive. It paused at 104th Street. "We used to live near here," I said; and I could see myself riding downtown in the spring of '18, on my way to Grand Central Station and the army camp. The bus top was open and I had scanned the river, registering in my mind the picture of park slopes, of ships at anchor and all the Jersey shore. For I had been going to war and I thought I might never return.

I left Dick at 72nd Street. My mind turned to the newspaper columns of the week: the President's interview with the press, the Senate bill for selective service. And I recalled the long lines of young men in '17, the hopeful remarks about flat feet and eyes with short sight, of hernias and a touch of lung trouble—maybe it was really t.b. Everyone filed through the receiving room to the physical exam. And here among the tired doctors were naked men, and rumors of favoritism, of political privilege which enabled some to escape as others were tossed into the caldron. Unaccountably I thought of Dave Hochstein, the young violinist who had died in the trenches; and of Arthur Raskind, whose myopia saved him; and of Bert Michaels, who lived long enough to become a second louie in his uncle's uniform factory.

My job today was to find out if the new generation knew what was happening to them. I chose a little delicatessen on the corner of Columbus Avenue for my first stop.

The three men in Abe's were divided in opinion. Gersh, who is fat-faced and flabby, said he wouldn't go to war unless he had to. He hated Hitler, but just the same this was a phony war. Matthias was blond, with pink cheeks and shiny blue eyes. He was drinking beer from the bottle as he snapped: "What for you don't want to go? What you doing round here, I like to know. . . ."

In the argument which followed, I heard Matthias say that it was a banker's war, yes, but what was a good American to do? The impasse ended as a newcomer, sallow cheeks and unpressed trousers, entered and was bold to state that he'd go. "I ain't got no job as it is," he said.

"Five dollars a month," the fat Gersh snorted; "I'd go if they pay me twenty-five per—not for less." He dug teeth into bread and reddish beef covered with coleslaw.

"Five a month would be more'n I'm getting now," said the newcomer.

Behind the counter, Harry, who is Abe's assistant on quiet mornings, said: "Long hours here, no pay . . . what's the difference to me? They got me up the creek as it is. I'd go . . . I don't like this Hitler nohow."

On Tuesday the President had hinted that he would support a bill to establish camps where youths would be trained as soldiers, behind-the-lines mechanics, workers in essential industries, and conservationists on the CCC model. Roosevelt had remarked that camp life would help youth to stop thinking "loosely," to live normally, making youth unselfish, teaching youth to live with youth.

"Sounds like the Hitler idea," a young German said on East 86th Street. We stood in the shadow of the Yorkville Casino. Here faces and figures were designed differently from in the Bronx. Blond Germans and Slavs, Hungarians with a trace of Magyar in their coloration, tall, bulky fellows, girls with tawny skins and hair light as spun gold.

"I was in the Sportspalast that night in '31. Took a trip from Westphalia with my father. Then we went back home. No one knew about Hitler in our town. I was seventeen then, and I proceeded to forget. In '33 Hitler came upon us unexpectedly. My father wanted me to enter a Berlin gymnasium and so he took me to Berlin again. We didn't know brownshirts existed. I started school the next fall, but the Nazis kicked me out because my father had been head of the cooperative in our town. I never did know that he had any politics, but they yanked him off to a concentration camp. I managed to get some money from an uncle and came over here, all by myself. That Roosevelt idea does sound like what Hitler used to offer us German boys. A uniform, no opportunity to read too many newspapers, meetings where only subjects they like can be discussed. . . . And of course a trade—that appeals to most young fellows—but it really means a trade in a munitions plant, no? Well, if Hitler comes over here, he won't be able to put my father in an American concentration camp on this side," he said.

"Why?" I asked.

"Even little Adolf can't kill a man twice."

Pessimism from this young German. Thirty blocks farther north on New York's East Side is the American Labor Party Club of Vito Marcantonio. It's called the LaGuardia Club in honor of the mayor who once worked closely with Congressman "Marc," as he is known to thousands in East Harlem. The club occupies a brownstone front near Second Avenue. From the outside it looks much like a Tammany place. But inside the atmosphere is entirely different. Here are no whisperings, no conferences behind closed doors. When he's in town "Marc" sits at a desk meeting his constituents. They gather before the rail, sit on folding chairs awaiting their turns. Their requests, their complaints, anyone can hear what is going on.

Anyone can hear what is going on in the mind of this congressman. He fought against the anti-alien bills. He was all by himself in opposition to the huge war appropriation bill. He exposed the President's unprecedented "fifth column" accusations directed especially against Italian-born Americans. Everyone knows where he stands.

I glanced around the basement room. Two score men and women waited to consult him. An interpreter translated the plea of the dark-skinned Guatemalan woman who hadn't received her relief check. An Irish American couple smilingly passed the rail to tell "Marc" that their boy had got that job in the box factory. Part time, to be sure, but—thanks to him—a job. And the Italian American was voluble in his native tongue as he flourished the scroll with the big red seal. Was he a citizen? Would he be fingerprinted, deported back to the greedy maw of old Muss?

In the hall, children, a well-dressed blonde woman. Shirtsleeved and brawny, a man waved me to "Marc's" side. I told him what I wanted.

"You can say that the youth don't want to go to war," the congressman from proletarian Harlem declared. "Youth is wise today. Wise to the anti-alien bills, wise about this conscription, wise to all this war propaganda stuff. . . ."

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Was this true? In an upper Harlem bar, at 153rd Street and Eighth Avenue, the Negro at my left was gray-haired. In his lapel he wore the bronze button of the American Legion. He wanted to talk baseball. The Dodgers were really bums; the Giants would win the flag. But somehow the President's proposal that youth be dragooned into labor camps or conscripted for the army, according to Senator Burke's formula, dropped like a bomb into the conversation. "Yes, I was drafted, in the infantry, 365th Division. . ." He shook his head. "I don't like to talk about it." You could read the bitterness in his face.

Martin is a Negro who lives in the neat project houses at the top of Seventh Avenue. He works downtown as a printer's assistant. "It made me laugh," he said over his beer, "to hear Roosevelt talk about democratic ideals from the campus of the University of Virginia. I was born down in Richmond. I know I can't even walk on that campus. In America democracy is a matter of geography. Up here, and in towns like Boston, I got half a chance. Just half."

The legionnaire shifted positions so that he could talk to the white man at my right. "That's right," he said. "Say, we ain't got even half a chance, come to think of it. We had Negro officers in the 365th but it took a fight to get 'em."

The younger man told how six West Indian Negroes had stowed away to England to fight, as he ironically said, "for Mother England. No paper published a line about them over here. But I read somewhere that when they landed in tattered clothes, a newspaper over there ran the story: 'Six West Indian darkies arrived here to fight for Mother England. They received ninety days for vagrancy.' "

The legionnaire said: "I wouldn't want to go through it again."

Four young New Yorkers traveled to Washington with a petition that day. It bore twenty thousand signatures to a memorial addressed to the President. The memorial asked that he desist in his headfirst plunge into war. On the trip went a Brooklyn Negro boy, Tom Jones; a New York girl, Jean Harrie; a young trade unionist, David Livingston; and Wesley Nelson, who devotes his young energies to religion.

The President did not see them. Nor did any of the President's many secretaries. Nor did any representative of the administration. They left the petition with an employee of the White House, who promised that it would—somehow—reach the President.

The four young people represented the New York Youth Congress. They had heard the President's notorious "twaddle" speech that day when they stood in the rain on the White House lawn. Since then time has passed, invaluable time.

The resolution which the President did not wish to read last week said:

The 300,000 members of the youth organizations whom we represent are loyal to American democracy, determined to defend and extend it, determined to keep America at peace. We place first for the preservation of American democracy the defeat of President Roosevelt's proposal to regiment the young men and women of America to compulsory military training and forced labor. We regard the plan to discipline the thinking of young Americans as identical with the methods used by Hitler in destroying the democracy of Germany.

Our talents, our energies, our ideals are at the service of the American people. We want to work to build homes for the homeless, hospitals for the sick, to produce food and clothing for the needy.

Lennie is sallow, with shadows under his eyes. He works nights and goes to a city college during the day. I met him on the pavement in front of a 23rd Street cafeteria. He told me about the new ruling in LaGuardia's municipal institutions of higher education. Lennie told me he was called to the dean's office. "We're warning you," said the dean, "that henceforth we're not going to stand for this kind of nonsense from you ASU boys. You youngsters go back to your classes and study. Keep out of politics. It's none of your business."

Lennie calmly asked: "Suppose I don't?"

"In these times, young man," said the dean, "you must take the advice of your elders."

"Be seen but not heard?"

"Exactly."

"And if—"

"We will not tolerate peace meetings on the campus. You may take my warning at face value."

The next morning, said Lennie, Bert Witt, president of the American Students Union, issued a formal statement:

Conscription is a menace to American policy, because it is tied up to a foreign policy which is bringing us closer every day to war. We are for the defense of our country, but we do not believe that the best defense for America is to lead us on the path to fascism.

Sylvia is the kind of girl you'd want your sister to be. Dark-haired, with oval black eyes, a soft voice, soft but determined. Joe, her husband, works in a cleaning and dyeing plant. He works in the union, too; and when that evening came around, he was worn out.

The Peace Association chapter meeting was scheduled for 8:30. Sylvia could only depend upon a few friends. There was Judy, who dressed like Sylvia, smart, not too expensively—who could dress expensively on Sylvia's salary plus Joe's? Energetic Evelyn was there too; and Milton. But the burden rested upon Sylvia.

At 8:45 only four people were in the room. Sylvia, pert little Judy, Milton, Evelyn. Harold, Judy's husband, bustled in. He came over to the table where Sylvia sat. "I'll be chairman, if you want me to," he said.

"Do I want you to?" Sylvia repeated. "I'm scared to death."

Three dollars for the room. Leaflets. Hard work. Five people. Sylvia wondered what was wrong. If Joe had come. Or Roger—who was sick with the flu. Or Bee—who knew how to run meetings from her experience in the ILG.

The door swung open. A couple, strangers, entered. Judy greeted them, found seats for them. Sylvia heard voices in the hall. Another pair of strangers, an elderly man and woman. Then two youths. Sylvia's heart skipped a beat. Behind the two youths came a man about thirty, with frank smile and keen blue eyes.

"I'm Emmanuel Block," he said in a businesslike tone. "I'm to speak here tonight."

He began to chat with her. Before she knew what was happening, the room was nearly full. Mr. Block was speaking, Harold was in the chair, and the audience—forty-two by now—listened with fixed attention as Mr. Block traced the long and crooked path from Munich to the frightful war of betrayal. A trail beaten by masters in the art of deception, he said; worn by "defenders" of democracy who betrayed democracy . . . Chamberlain, Daladier, Casados, Beck, Reynaud—now, Weygand and Petain . . . and Roosevelt.

Eyes were fixed on the speaker. Two young girls, open-mouthed, sat close to the wall. Two boys leaned against the wall near the door, eyes troubled.

"Conscription . . . labor camps . . . the familiar road to fascism," the speaker said. His voice rose to the climax. He sat down.

"We will have questions in a moment," Chairman Harold announced. "Questions and discussion."

An older man spoke, his voice filled with emotion, when the question period opened. "I was in the army twenty-two years ago," he said. "I promised myself I'd never fight again. But I would. I'd fight at the drop of a panama . . . if this war was to become my fight. But how can I, when they're doing to us over here what they did in France? Attacking unions, free speech, the ballot. Stopping health appropriations and relief. Say, I know their tricks. They're fighting us, not Hitler. If I thought they'd really fight him, you know where I'd be. Out front with a Tommy gun up against his ribs. . . ."

At 10:45 the meeting ended. Sylvia, Judy, Harold, Evelyn, Milton—they felt fine. From the audience had come a proposal to hold an open-air meeting next week. Mr. Block had offered to help. He'd speak to the neighbors—it would be a privilege. Later, as the group of young married folk stood on the sidewalk, Sylvia said: "Think of it—we've helped just that much in keeping America at peace. I feel great!"

The seaman I met near midnight at the foot of 14th Street, where the docks of the Compagnie Generale Transatlantique have shielded for many months the great vessels of the French Line, was determined to convince me. "I been over there since it began," he declared. "The man who wants to start that kind of stuff over here is no friend of mine. It's a racket, bud. Get us off the streets, put us in the army, stick us in camps, pay us army pay or worse, give us lousy food and no homes. And make us like it. . . ."

He winked at me. "We won't like it this time."

JAMES MORISON.

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# Death and Taxes

## The war party prepares both for the American people. Congressional tax plans strike hardest at Poorman's pocket.

EVENTS today move with tank and bomber speed on the battlefield, in the White House, in the halls of Congress. Until the closing days of May 1940 peace and quiet reigned in the realm of taxation; today, the "Defense Tax" Bill is blitzkrieging its way toward enactment (and perhaps *fait accompli* by the time this article reaches the reader). The White House sets the pace. Wrote the New York *Times* on June 5: "The President's only request was that the measure be put through Congress at the earliest possible date."

Who will foot the new tax burden? Richman or Poorman?

The new tax bill, which has been passed by both houses of Congress consists of two parts: (1) permanent changes in the income tax structure and (2) "defense taxes" for a five-year period. Let us first consider the "defense taxes." The House Committee on Ways and Means designated these as "supertaxes"; the Senate Finance Committee, for greater palatability, called them "defense taxes."

These "defense taxes" consist essentially of a 10 percent increase in income taxes and similar boosts in all other taxes. This 10 percent increase is generally explained in the press along these lines: Mr. Taxpayer would be required to add 10 percent to the income tax he now pays, that is, if his old tax was $100, he would simply add $10 (supertax) and his total tax would be $110.

True? Fair, isn't it? No! Only half true and hardly fair. True for Poorman, not true for Richman. For the legislation has a trick clause under which John Richman, with a net income of $1,000,000, will pay a supertax of only 4.5 percent of his old tax, and Lucius Richman, with a net income of $5,000,000, will pay a supertax of only 3.2 percent of his old tax. Getting down to figures: John Richman, with a net income of $1,000,000, would have to pay $686,204 (without the supertax). If the supertax were computed as 10 percent of this tax, it would be $68,620.40. But, through a trick clause, the supertax is computed by applying 10 percent against $313,796 ($1,000,000 less $686,204) instead of against the tax of $686,204. And so this makes the supertax $31,379.60 instead of $68,620.40—that is, 4.5 percent of his old tax.

### VOICE FROM THE PAST

Somewhere we recall a voice which said: "Also our present emergency and a common sense of decency make it imperative that no new group of war millionaires come into being in this nation as a result of the struggles abroad." The voice—the President's, from a fireside chat, May 26, 1940.

We say nothing of the real issue: Can Joe Poorman, earning $1,200 and saddled with heavy indirect taxes, endure a 10 percent increase as readily as Lucius Richman with a $5,000,000 net income (even if he had to pay 10 percent)?

We come now to the "defense tax" increases in excise and miscellaneous taxes (liquor, beer, tobacco, gasoline, admissions, etc). It is common knowledge that the ultimate consumer bears the burden of excise taxes which are passed along to the purchaser. This type of taxation ("indirect taxes") is especially oppressive to Poorman and has been condemned by advocates of progressive tax ideas. But what is particularly iniquitous in the "defense taxes" is that the rates of increase and the items subjected to additional taxation overwhelmingly favor Richman. The supertax on Richman's commodities (corporate securities, conveyances, safe deposit boxes, etc.) is in almost all cases only 10 percent, but the supertax on Poorman's commodities increases the rates 50 percent on gasoline, 33⅓ percent on liquor, 20 percent on beer and wines.

But the real attitude of the congressional tax generals is discernible in their treatment of amusement admissions taxes. Under existing law, admissions less than 41 cents are exempt, so that if you go to a 25 cent movie house there is no tax on this "luxury." The committees of both houses of Congress decided to remedy that. The report of the House committee stated: "Instead of raising the rate of tax, your committee deemed it much simpler and more feasible from an administrative point of view to decrease the exemption from 40 to 30 cents." And the Senate committee, not to be outdone, said: "Instead of raising the rate of tax, your committee deemed it much simpler and more feasible from an administrative point of view to decrease the exemption from 40 to 9 cents." Following passage of the bill in the Senate, the House and Senate conferees making adjustments in the bill compromised by fixing the admissions tax at 10 percent on admissions of 21 cents or more.

In cold cash, Poorman will pay about $376,000,000 of the $383,000,000 "defense tax" increases levied on excise and miscellaneous taxes—Richman about $7,000,000; or in terms of percentages, Poorman will pay about 98 percent of the increased miscellaneous taxes. Behind the barrage of "sacrifice-by-all," Poorman is sacrificed by the tax generals of Wall Street.

The original proposals (HR 9966) of the House committee dealt only with "supertaxes" and made no permanent changes in the income tax structure. But immediately thereafter, the *United States News* (June 7), edited by David Lawrence, a favorite stooge of big business, declared:

> Government officials as well as tax experts admit that the present tax proposal has many inequities not apparent at first sight. For example, the person who now pays no income tax would not be required to contribute directly to defense funds. A general revision of the tax laws would be directed toward a more even distribution of the tax burden. Exemptions on individual incomes might be lowered from the present minimum tax level of $2,500 for married couples and $1,000 for single persons to $2,000 and $800, respectively.

This is equality with a vengeance. And several days afterward, the "inequity" is remedied. The tax base is broadened, following the exact figures of the *United States News*. Let it not be said that Bob Poorman earning $17 a week is to be deprived of the privilege and constitutional right "to contribute directly to defense funds."

But the generalissimos of the Pay-As-You-Go-Poorman campaign, spurred on by the success of these early battles, may not even stop here. The *United States News* warns: "Not in the picture at present, but definitely in the background is a general federal sales tax of from 1 to 4 percent." And the Republican minority on the Ways and Means Committee, the stalwart defender of Poorman, quick to grasp the situation, declares in its minority report that it is in accord with the purposes of the bill and that "after the present bill becomes law, the only substantial source of revenue which will be left for the federal government will be a general sales tax." A fitting epilogue for the Defense Tax Bill.

### BLITZKRIEG BY TAXES

It looks as if the Hitlerian piecemeal technique of conquest is being employed by the Roosevelt tax strategists. First comes the Supertax on Income Taxes (the progressive character of income taxes is featured); then follows the Supertax on Excise Taxes (enemy Poorman having been beguiled); when this fortification is taken, Broadening-the-Tax-Base is launched; ultimately, the capital is entered: Federal-Sales-Tax.

To counter protests against this blitzkrieg on the pockets of the poor, the tax generals declared that a study of excess-profits taxation was to be ordered for the next session. Nobly they proclaimed: "It is the desire of this committee . . . that there shall not be an opportunity for the creation of war millionaires or the further substantial enrichment of already wealthy persons because of the rearmament program" (House Committee Report). On this the New York *Herald Tribune* (June 9) commented: "The com-

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mittee, it was made known, decided on a study of excess profits rather than immediate action, first to prevent delay in enactment of the pending bill as a revenue measure and second to *head off blocs forming in both the House and Senate to 'take the profits out of war' by some legislative means or other.*" (Italics mine—J. R. W.) It was as recently as September 1939 that President Roosevelt in his message to the special session of Congress declared:

> If abnormal profits appear in our midst even in time of peace . . . I feel certain that the subject will be adequately dealt with *at the coming regular sessions of Congress.* (Italics mine—J. R. W.)

This is the "coming regular session of Congress." Score another broken promise for the administration.

The complete hypocrisy of the congressional tax generals was exposed in the course of the passage of the bill in the Senate. Senator La Follette, who sponsored an excess-profits tax amendment, told the Senate it would "be a sham and a delusion" to enact revenue legislation which contained no levy on excess profits. And the La Follette amendment was adopted by the Senate by a surprise vote of forty-one to thirty-one. Under this amendment, a corporation would have a flat exemption of $3,000 plus an additional exemption equal to 8 percent of its invested capital; profits in excess of the exemptions but less than 20 percent of invested capital would be taxed 20 percent, while profits in excess of the exemptions and exceeding 20 percent of the invested capital would be taxed 40 percent. Here's how it would work: If a corporation had $100,000,000 invested capital and earned $20,000,000 (20 percent on its invested capital) during the year, the exemption would be $3,000 plus $8,000,000 (8 percent of its invested capital), or $8,003,000; the "excess profits" would be $11,997,000 ($20,000,000 total profits less $8,003,000 exemption) and the excess-profits tax would be $2,399,400 (20 percent of $11,997,000 excess profits). Thus, it will be seen that the amount of excess-profits tax is comparatively slight in view of the fact that the corporation is earning 20 percent on its invested capital, which is a tremendous rate of profit and should be taxed more stiffly. The La Follette amendment, which was at least a step in the right direction, was eliminated in the House-Senate conference on the bill.

Also passed by the Senate (and eliminated by the House-Senate conferences) was the Connally amendment, which would go into effect only in the event of a congressional declaration of war. The principal feature of the Connally amendment is a provision that surtaxes on individual incomes in the higher brackets would rise to 80 percent, with a normal income tax rate of 10 percent. There are loopholes in the Connally amendment, but at any rate it establishes, to a certain extent, the desirable principle of "taking the profits out of war." The Connally proposal was substituted for one by Senator Bone which would have provided for really drastic taxation of incomes above a moderate level in time of war.

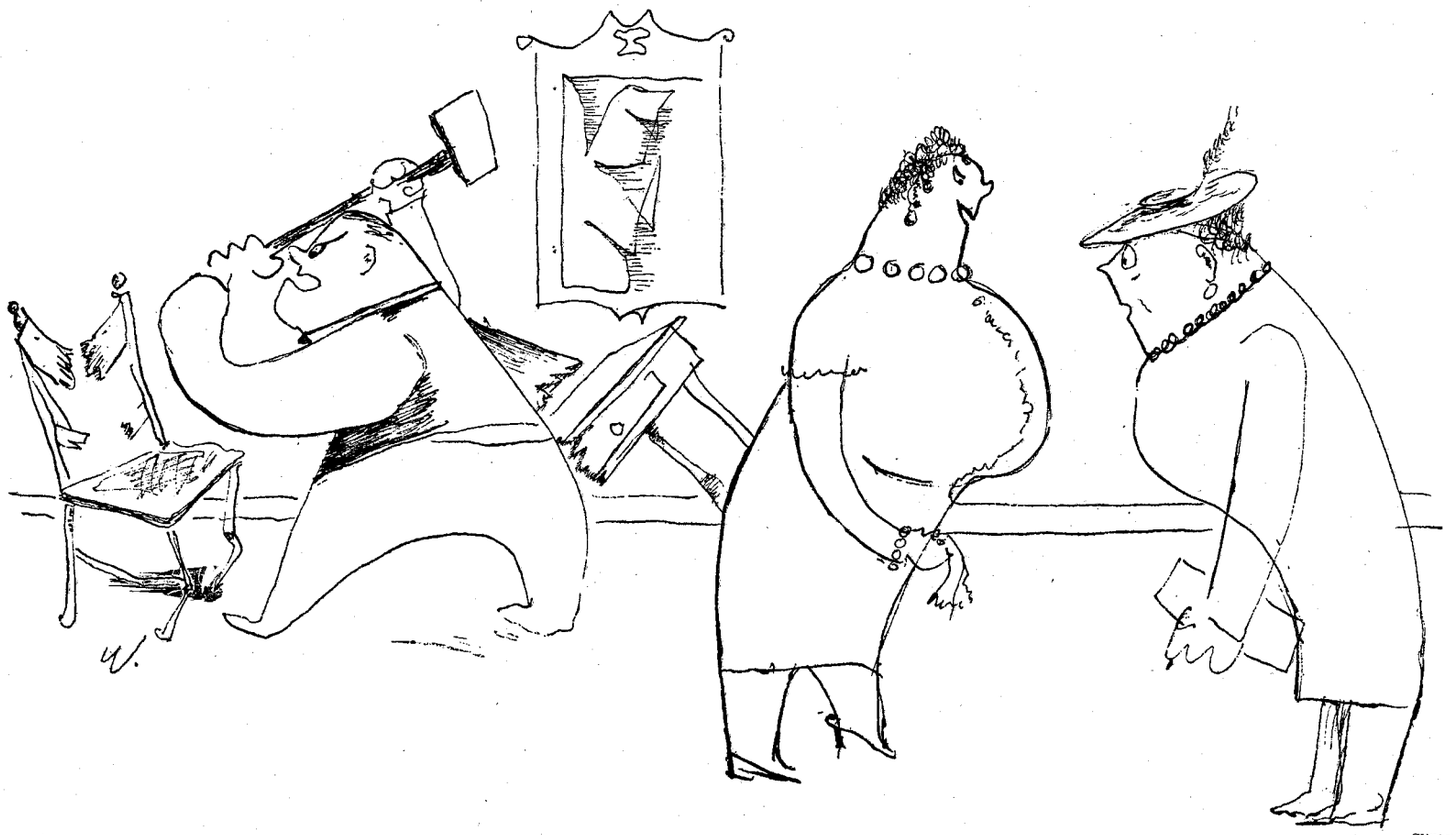
And this is of greatest import: the La Follette and Connally amendments were passed by the Senate despite the determined opposition of the administration leaders. This demonstrates that an effective campaign by the people could bring results.

A sound people's tax program would distribute the tax burden where it belongs—on those who will profit from war, on big business generally. Such a program must (1) oppose broadening of the tax base, (2) oppose increases in the excise taxes which fall ultimately on Poorman, (3) oppose the supertax on lower income tax brackets and demand the full 10 percent supertax on millionaires, (4) demand the immediate enactment, at this session, of a really stiff excess-profits tax on the high incomes of corporations and individuals.

J. R. WILSON.

## Jean Chiappe

A SPECIAL dispatch from Bordeaux to the Baltimore *Sun*, June 21, reports that Jean Chiappe, former prefect of the Paris police, has been appointed Municipal Council president in France's former capital. Chiappe was one of the most notorious fascists in all France. In 1935, when the Front Populaire was emerging, one of the popular slogans was "Chiappe *en prison!*" He was also involved in the Stavisky scandal and was forced from office at that time. The French people voted him out of his seat in the Chamber of Deputies in 1936, with further demands for his imprisonment. Now he returns to power—one of the many fascists whose treason to France is being rewarded by Der Fuehrer.



Clinton

*"George is getting himself into shape for Plattsburg"*

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# Noblesse Oblige at Plattsburg

## Ruth McKenney sees muscles flex at the Stork Club. The "Times" becomes the official organ of the gentleman soldiers.

WHO says America's upper classes are all a bunch of heels? Who says *noblesse oblige* went out with Richard the Lionhearted and other such quaint but backward characters? He lies, suh, he lies in his teeth, whoever he is.

For Marshall Field 3rd, and Marshall Field 4th, and Newbold Morris 1st, and plenty more of America's finest have volunteered to pay the government fifty bucks for the privilege of learning how to be gentleman soldiers at Plattsburg this summer. The whole thing is very affecting. It brings a tear to my eye and a lump to my throat. Here I've been going around thinking for years that Tommy Manville and that Rockefeller laddie, the one who wins the waltz contests at his Daddy's night club, were practically the fairest flowers of the local *haute bourgeoisie*; and now, all of a sudden overnight, the Plattsburg idea sweeps over El Morocco and the Stork Club, and our decent, respectable young men flex a muscle, steel their jaws, and trot off to volunteer for military service. It's wonderful! It's colossal!

But maybe we ought to backtrack a little, for the benefit of innocent customers who don't read the New York *Times,* now the official organ of the Plattsburg Boys. So what's this Plattsburg Idea? Owing to the fact that I was a mere slip of a lass, five years old, to be precise, when the last war was declared, I grew up thinking Plattsburg was the place where my Aunt Jennie lived and almost died once. Aunt Jennie, on my mother's side of the family, was by way of being an heiress, on Farrel standards anyway, and the time she almost died made Plattsburg famous in our clan. To this day my grandma remembers it as though it were only yesterday, although in point of fact it was 1901. The Farrels had been saving up their dough and planned a mass attack on the World's Fair, to see Little Egypt, I believe. Just as the clan was about to embark on the steam horses, word came that Aunt Jennie was sinking. Eighteen Farrels, including my cousin Pat (3rd), trotted down to Plattsburg to stand around Aunt Jennie's deathbed. But Aunt Jennie was made of stern stuff. The doctors had kept her horrid condition from her, and she had no inkling of it until she saw her eighteen relatives weeping noisily around her bedside.

So she pulled herself together and recovered. The shock proved too much for my cousin Pat (3rd), who repaired to the local refreshment stand. He died on the way home of delirium tremens, calling out for Little Egypt in his last agonies. Grandma still holds it against Plattsburg, N. Y., a community which she refers to as a hellhole—strong language for my grandma.

Aunt Jennie and Plattsburg made a strong impression on my child-mind, and I reeled with shock one day last month when I picked up the *Times* and observed the word "Plattsburg" liberally displayed in black type. But examination proved they weren't exhuming Aunt Jennie. No, it seems Plattsburg, N. Y., was more than merely Aunt Jennie Farrel's hideout. Plattsburg, you will be interested to know, stands for "service." Also *noblesse oblige.* It seems that back in 1916, when the American public was being very recalcitrant about dying in the last war, a group of interested parties (otherwise known as "public spirited") got themselves up the jolliest training camp at Plattsburg, just for the select few, you understand, gentlemen who worked in Wall Street, or graduates of Harvard and old Yale men, and all that. The general idea was to make people who were against America entering the war feel like a bunch of worms.

And now Plattsburg is booming again. But you'll be glad to know that the Plattsburg idea is not narrowly confined to the plans for a summer training camp to help Newbold Morris brush up on how to run a tank. The Plattsburg Boys are too public spirited to hog all the fun for themselves. The outfit is the sponsor of the new military conscription bill introduced by Senator Burke.

By the strangest sort of coincidence, the *Times* ran the story next to the interesting article describing Senator Burke's new bill. You had Plattsburg all over the place, so to speak. In the lefthand column, here were Pappy Marshall Field and Junior getting off some hot remarks about a man's duty, etc., etc. In the righthand column you had the business about every male citizen and alien, age eighteen to sixty, registering and all the gents from twenty-one to forty-five doing eight months' compulsory military service. The *Times* listed a lot of the "Plattsburg" group who had helped to get the senator's bill written, and all that. Lewis Douglas, the man who raised hell when he was director of the budget about spending money for the unemployed; Pres. James Bryant Conant of Harvard who is working hard to surpass the enviable record of his predecessor, the man who said Sacco and Vanzetti were guilty; Col. Julius Ochs Adler—a National Guard colonel, that is—who owns part of the *Times,* and a lot of other important people.

Of course there are some interesting differences between voluntary military service for our upper classes and compulsory service for our hoi polloi. In the lefthand column the Harvard and Yale men are paying some odd dollars for the privilege of getting to be second lieutenants. And in the righthand column the bill states the pay of men doing their compulsory military service will be $5 a month and traveling expenses. It doesn't say how the $5 will cover supporting wives and children left at home for the eight months, or insurance payments, or doctor bills for the baby who fell off the porch and broke his leg while Daddy was serving his country digging ditches. And will the $5 a month be plus or minus toothpaste, magazines, cigarettes, newspapers, movies, postage stamps, and other little comforts of life? They paid our soldiers $30 a month and up in the last war, but things change. And after all, the Marshall Fields, both 3rd and 4th, aren't even getting five bucks a month, they're paying their own way. Come to think of it, isn't it paternalism, this $5 a month? Shouldn't sturdy American citizens pay their own way?

But then, the Plattsburg Boys are hardheaded realists. They know the proletariat (canaille as they say in President Conant's circles) have to be softened up with something, or they just won't play. Five bucks a month to the recruits doing military service will probably wreck the treasury and cause ruinous taxes (ruinous for the people in the $1,200 a year class) but what can you do? For the elite of Wall Street may be enlisting in droves for military training, but the workers and farmers of this country are heading in the opposite direction. The United States Army admits, with tears in its eyes, that it just can't seem to get enough recruits to bring the army up to peacetime strength. Evidently the only people in the United States who like the idea of this country going to war well enough to volunteer for military training are the gents from Wall Street. No wonder—it's their war.

I know I'm only a weak woman and not a military expert, but it would be interesting to know what four million men, officered by Newbold Morris and such, are going to do puttering around America's Coast Guard stations. That's a powerful lot of men to man the guns on Governor's Island and keep a sea watch at the San Francisco Presidio. And the Rio Grande is a long river, but a million men seem quite a lot for the Mexican border. Niagara Falls is right pretty, but I'm afraid eight months is a long time to look at its glories.

War, like spit, is an ugly word. Can it possibly be that the Plattsburg Boys are really thinking of training four million men for national defense? Or is it remotely probable that somewhere in President Conant's mighty brain lurks the thought that this country should enter the imperialist war abroad and send our young men to die again in a foreign land for a purpose foreign to their lives?

And yet—I'm afraid the Plattsburg Boys are in for a good cry. For Wall Street and El Morocco may be enlisted in droves for the big social doings up at Plattsburg this summer, but the rest of the country remains strangely and stubbornly apathetic to Senator Burke and his compulsory military training bill. It may not be cricket, it may be vulgar and low, but alas for the gentlemen from Plattsburg, *The Yanks Are Not Coming.*

RUTH MCKENNEY.

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★

*(Continued from page 4)*

tive for endangering the lives, peace, and prosperity of the people.

The Roosevelt administration has scuttled the Good Neighbor policy and is trying to dragoon the Latin-American republics into supporting its war program. It is the Communists who call for

a united struggle together with the peoples of Latin America and the Philippines to resist and curb the power of American big banks, trusts, and speculators abroad, to eliminate their dictation of American policy, to secure full independence to Puerto Rico and the Philippines, and jointly to resist and defeat those who would drag the Americas into the war.

Similarly, the Communist convention called for defending and strengthening the National Labor Relations Act, Walsh-Healey act, and Wage-Hour Act; expansion of WPA to provide jobs for at least three million workers; old age pensions of $60 after the age of sixty, and other improvements in the Social Security Act; farm legislation that will guarantee farmers cost of production, secure them in possession of the land, restore land to tenants and sharecroppers, and provide other benefits to enable American farmers to live in decency; a $5,000,000,000 annual housing program (the administration has shelved the Wagner bill to appropriate $800,000,000 for new housing); a comprehensive people's health program (the $10,000,000-a-year bill passed by the Senate is nothing more than a gesture—even this languishes in the House).

Together with this social and economic program, the Communists proposed the defense of civil liberties on every front and the extension of democracy through passage of the Anti-Lynching Bill and outlawing of the Southern poll taxes.

As Earl Browder pointed out, this is not a program of socialism, but one that can be realized under capitalism. Yet the opposition of the economic and political rulers of America to a program of this kind underscores the bankruptcy and sterility of the present order; it makes more urgent the socialist solution of the problems of mankind. Short of this solution, America needs today a genuine people's party and a people's government, based on the trade unions, the farmers, the progressive middle class groups, dedicated to the struggle against fascism at home as well as abroad. Only such a government, devoted to the economic and political defense of the American people, can be trusted with their military protection. Billions for American living standards and liberties, not a cent for aggressive war. This is the way to defend America.

## *Postscript to Munich*

THE work of Daladier, Blum, and the Cagoulards is all but done. From Compiegne to Munich was a journey of just twenty years; from Munich to Compiegne, a moment. The armistice terms accepted by France may be considered a postscript to the Munich document. The defeat, the occupation, and the terrors which still face France—for she is not safely out of the war at all—must be added to the long reckoning which the French people will sooner or later make with the two hundred families. Even when acceptance of terms from Germany had become inevitable, surrender was carried out in a treasonable manner. There seems little doubt that the French government speeded the advance of the invading troops even while postponing and delaying termination of hostilities. Why did Petain on June 17, when yet unready for unconditional surrender, confuse the troops and paralyze resistance by publicly broadcasting that France must lay down her arms? There is an answer: Petain and his masters wanted German troops to be handy when they signed the armistice, just in case the French people were provoked into saying *their* word. "The French bourgeoisie are ready to shelter themselves behind German bayonets to escape the reckoning which the indignant people are preparing for them," a manifesto of the French Communist Party warns. In the large portion of France which will be occupied by German and Italian troops for some time to come it will indeed be difficult for the people of France to right their wrongs. In the unoccupied territory the Cagoulards may well fear the "fury of recrimination" and a new Paris Commune, as the New York *Times* puts it.

## *Tory Tricks*

INCREASING popular resistance to the war and desperate efforts by the tories to hang on to power characterize the internal politics of Britain as the war's new phase begins. In the demand that Chamberlain be kicked out of the Cabinet the people crystallize their resentment at the course of betrayal pursued by the whole of British imperialism since 1931. If Chamberlain goes, can Churchill be far behind? The rulers understand this very well and so Churchill clings to Chamberlain for dear life, though the latter has become a serious burden. If Chamberlain should be forced out after all, the tories fear an immediate end to Conservative rule. What sounds like a prepared line of retreat has been cautiously publicized: it calls for the formation of a Churchill–Lloyd George–Ernest Bevin tri-dictatorship accompanied by suspension of Parliament.

Toward France in defeat the British government has fully worked out its line. A series of propaganda releases from London "reveals" what we have been saying for a long time, that the bourgeois politicians and army chiefs of France are Cagoulard traitors. Along with this attempt to discredit the present French government, a London puppet government for France seems to have been set up and Churchill is appealing to commanders of French warships and colonial governors over Petain's head.

It is not at all clear where the bulk of the French battle fleet will be found when the intrigues and counter-intrigues have run their course. A British cruiser last week chased two smaller French ships back to a Canadian port from which they had departed without his majesty's permission. Many French vessels are said to be at Alexandria. It is claimed by the Petain government, however, that "safe" commanders have been put in charge during the last few days and it would not be surprising to hear of armed clashes between French units and British forces.

One thing *is* clear. Churchill is prepared to use every form of pressure to force Frenchmen and French colonials to keep on dying for the lion now that the French army is out of the running. The argument that the armistice virtually forces France to aid in the coming battle against Britain simply foreshadows British assaults on France. "The horrible sequel," prophesies the New York *Times*, "will be that the British will be forced to make war upon French territory now in enemy hands; they may bomb French cities, and incidentally kill French civilians, and perhaps starve France in the grim effort to blockade and starve Germany."

Pressure and coercion against the dominions and colonies is the keynote of British ruling class internal policy at this juncture. Egypt has been forced into crisis because London was dissatisfied with her government's policy of keeping out of the war as far as possible. Canada and Australia have been jockeyed into adopting "dictatorship" laws similar to that enacted in England. Similar regulations were imposed on Palestine by simple order of the appointed governor. From Ireland to India, British agents in high place are pushing unwilling peoples toward the imperialist war. The resistance, however, is imposing in extent and depth. The governments of Canada and Australia, for instance, have not yet dared extend conscription to *overseas service*. Fierce strikes rage in India, Rhodesia, and the West Indies. In New Zealand the opposition remains outside the war council. The grandiose plans of empire war-pushers to supply from twenty thousand to thirty thousand pilots each year, seem to have met a conspicuous lack of enthusiasm in Canada and Australia where the bulk of the work was to be done. With the plan six months old Australia had only 489 actually in training while Canada's part consisted in doing nothing from October to April and then plunging into the training of 169 students!

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## Billion Dollar Diplomacy

TYPICALLY imperialist is the proposed inter-American cartel for centralized marketing of western hemisphere raw materials. The control of "staple export" surpluses common to the United States and Latin America (wheat and beef, for instance) is designed to close the hemisphere to the trade of a Europe under German domination. It is, as the *United States News* puts it, "just the first of [Roosevelt's] trade-war plans." Washington itself characterizes the plan (New York *Times,* June 23) in this way: "The plan would amount to a partial embargo by American nations on totalitarian Europe unless it was prepared to accept new world methods of trade." If the plan were successful it would also freeze the British and other rivals out of this slice of the globe. A pleasant little scheme for economic warfare, with the people of Latin America as blockade fodder.

The mechanics of the scheme depend upon the perennial economic dilemma of the countries below the Rio Grande. Europe under any regime can buy South American wheat, meat, cotton, and coffee that the United States has never bought and will not now accept. But Europe consolidated into one economic unit will continue to buy from South America only on condition that South America purchases its manufactured goods from Europe and not from the United States. Of course whoever wins the trade gets preferential opportunities for investment, raw materials, and the other golden drippings of the imperialist barbecue. Since the United States can't *use* South American surpluses, Wall Street plans to purchase the services of Latin America's big landlords, capitalists, and their politicos by subsidies from the United States Treasury. The subsidies might be in the form of outright purchase of surpluses or payment for reducing acreage, but in any case the subsidies will go, as a matter of course, only to the millionaire producers. The little fellows will find themselves completely shut out of the world market, perhaps forced by law to abandon production of wheat and meat. They are likely to be driven off their few acres to the further enrichment of the overlords. As between even the rich South American producers of, say, meat and the huge packing combines of the United States, whose meat is going to get preferential treatment by the inter-American trading corporation? You're right—Armour, Swift, and Cudahy will be favored. In short, the inter-American cartel, with a billion or two of exclusively United States capital, is dollar diplomacy on the grand scale.

## Plus Battleships

WHAT American dollars can't do American battleships are counted on to accomplish. The USS *Quincy* is now in Montevideo harbor. The *Herald Tribune* hints crudely that "her presence" there could make it plain to the government of Uruguay that she had better cancel German contracts for six months hence. If Uruguay persists in accepting "fat contracts" offered by the Nazis, the *Herald Tribune* points ominously to the nine eight-inch rifles of the *Quincy*.

Naturally there is something less than unstinted enthusiasm in Latin America for this bribe-and-beat policy of the Yankee colossus. Even the owning classes don't see eye to eye with Roosevelt. Take Brazil where the single important crop, coffee, cannot be disposed of without sale to Europe. Dictator Vargas depends greatly on Wall Street allowances for the maintenance of his regime, but a few days ago he delivered a eulogy of Nazi "vigor" by way of reminding Roosevelt that he could always make a deal with Hitler and Mussolini. Dictator Vargas doesn't speak for the people of Brazil. They want no sellouts to the fascists. Neither are they reconciled to the role of pawn in Roosevelt's imperialist game.

## Baltic Liberation

INTERNAL democracy has come to the Baltic states. Their fascist rulers have fled and the new governments have all announced popular programs, liberation of anti-fascist political prisoners, equality of nationalities, and friendly relations with the Soviet Union. Small wonder that the peoples of the three countries have been celebrating the arrival of the increased Red Army forces. Since the 1920's despotic governments have ruled Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The stubborn authoritarian rulers changed nothing in their internal or external policies when they made treaties with the Soviet Union. It is enough to recall that, while handing Vilna over to Lithuania, the Soviet authorities had to make a demonstration of force to halt pogroms against the Jews! The latter are undoubtedly among the warmest welcomers of the new troops.

The typewriter generals at Stockholm fought valiantly to confuse the story for the American reader. They filed dispatches that Red Army troops had been met by hostile demonstrations and that Soviet officers had ordered local police to fire on the demonstrators. When this was proved false, the New York *Times'* Mr. Otto Tolischus admitted that thousands of Letts had turned out in Riga to *celebrate* the arrival of the Soviet troops; but Red Army officers, he whoppered, were "disdainful of the 'rabble'" and ordered the police to suppress them! Fact: the "rabble" halted Soviet tanks frequently to hold spontaneous meetings of welcome and Red Army officers addressed them cordially.

Most desperate rearguard engagement fought by the typewriter generals was the effort to prove that the Soviet move was an act of pressure and a threat to Germany. The Tass agency routed the generals with an official government statement. No one, it declared drily, need hope "to mar Soviet-German relations" by circulating idle rumors and malicious gossip. "Good neighborly relations," the Tass release said, are based "not on passing motives of a temporary character, but on fundamental state interests of the USSR and Germany."

## Balkan Choice

KING CAROL has recognized Hitler's victory over France by scrambling to reshape Rumanian fascism in the image of the Nazi party. Anti-Semitism will become an official instead of an informal part of the government program; the Iron Guard will rule the roost; Rumanian oil will flow more or less exclusively to Germany and ownership of the

# Hemingway to MacLeish

Archibald MacLeish, poet and librarian of Congress, recently blamed the anti-war writers of his own generation for the "moral unpreparedness" of American youth today. Mr. MacLeish's statement has been discussed in recent issues of NEW MASSES by Samuel Sillen and Isidor Schneider. Most famous of the writers mentioned specifically by Mr. MacLeish was Ernest Hemingway, whose *A Farewell to Arms* is one of the great war novels of our time. Hemingway served as an ambulance driver with the Italian Army during World War I. His many services on behalf of the Spanish republic are well known to our readers. It was his play, *The Fifth Column,* dealing with fascist treachery behind the lines, which helped give currency to a phrase which reactionary elements in this country have sought to appropriate for their own purposes. *Life* magazine recently asked Hemingway to comment briefly on the MacLeish statement; the wired statement below is from *Life,* issue of June 24.

SIRS:—MacLeish seems to have a very bad conscience. Having fought fascism in every way that I know how in the places where you could really fight it, I have no remorse, neither literary nor political. Suggest that MacLeish read my play *The Fifth Column* and see again the film *The Spanish Earth*. If MacLeish had been at Guadalajara, Jarama, Madrid, Teruel, first and second battles of the Ebro, he might feel better. Young men wrote of the first war to show truly the idiocies and murderous stupidity of the way it was conducted by the Allies and Italy. Other young men wrote books that showed the same thing about the German conduct of the war. All agreed on war's vileness and undesirability. If the Germans have learned how to fight a war and the Allies have not learned, MacLeish can hardly put the blame on our books. Or do his highsounding words blame us because we never advocated a fascism to end fascism?

ERNEST HEMINGWAY.

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wells themselves may follow. It is very natural for despotic regimes in the small countries to get on the bandwagon of the strongest imperialist power, but there is another sentiment making its way through the Balkans these days. The regimes are under the pressure of their peoples who are anxious to avoid involvement in the war and domination by the victor. So it is that such governments as that of Yugoslavia now feel impelled to turn to the Soviet Union after refusing diplomatic relations with her for the past twenty years. Even the uniformly anti-Soviet diplomats and correspondents stationed in the Balkans concede that the popular sympathies of that danger area are overwhelmingly with the USSR.

## "Swing toward Intervention"

A "WAR CABINET" is the way the British press estimates Roosevelt's new "coalition" Cabinet. Trying to be discreet, almost all London papers refrained from editorial comment on the appointment of Republicans Knox and Stimson to key posts in the present Democratic administration. Their discretion wasn't quite enough, however, to conceal their evident elation. Headlines told the touchy truth. "US will have 'war Cabinet'; key jobs will be given to friends of the Allies," the *Daily Express* exulted. Only paper to editorialize on the "delicate" theme was the *Daily Mail*. It wouldn't come right out and say what it thought but remarked that Hitler and Mussolini would "understand." Our "own" New York *Herald Tribune* understood, too. It summed up the British press reaction in the frank headline: "London pleased by US coalition as swing toward intervention."

## They Pay for War

HISTORY is writing a flowing epitaph for the policy of "non-intervention" in the form of a flood of French refugees streaming into Spain. The French people, driven from their own country, are expiating the sins of Blum and Daladier. At the same time 170,000 Spanish refugees and International Brigaders are still trapped in French concentration camps and labor camps. Spaniards, Germans, Yugoslavs who *really* fought fascism—and appeasement, too. They are between the devil and the deep blue sea, between the Nazis and the Cagoulards. Their immediate need is for diplomatic protection and material aid. The government of Chile, backed by Mexico, proposes the creation of a special "neutral" zone in France to be protected by the flags of the American republics, as a temporary haven for the refugees. The government of the United States has $50,000,000 available for European relief work. The American people should demand that it back the Chilean proposal, send supply ships, aid in evacuating the Spanish victims of "non-intervention" to Mexico and Chile, and take a handsome quota of Spanish war refugees into the United States. Those in government circles who profess hatred of fascism must be compelled to act. The Spaniards and Internationals must not be returned to Franco or surrendered to Hitler. Write to Roosevelt and Hull today. Wire the French Embassy. Telephone the French consulate. Every minute counts.

## City of Brotherly Love

THE Republican Nominating Convention opens as we go to press. Huge papier-mache elephants move their tusks up and down before the Taft headquarters. Vandenberg supporters are handing out fans inscribed "Get on the Van wagon." Wendell L. Willkie has breezed into town after months of campaigning and refuses to tell reporters whether he is an open candidate. Whispering campaigns go on about the leading contenders. Rival state delegations fight over credentials. There are the usual jokes about "Tieless Joe" Tolbert of South Carolina, whose delegates are reported to have been picked in a corn liquor-filled conference.

The candidates can't make up their minds whether a neutrality or interventionist stand will pull more votes. Neither can the committee that's writing the foreign-policy platform plank. Dope stories out of Philadelphia predict a different version of the plank every day. The reporters, at least, are perfectly candid in letting the public know that vote pulling is the sole purpose of whatever foreign-policy stand will be taken. No one has any real convictions on the subject except that Wall Street's interests come first. The big question is how to say "peace—but" with better than a Groton-Harvard accent. Turner Catledge of the New York *Times*, on June 23, described the state of mind of the Resolutions Committee: "Instead of reaching conclusions that may stand up on the convention floor, these forty-odd leaders have run into one new confusion after another with each passing day." If the committee has paid any attention to matters like social security, the farm problem, or civil liberties, its ideas have not even made the back pages of any newspaper we've seen. The second largest political party in the country assembles in one of the most crucial years in history without any consistent policy, without any responsibility to the people, and minus even the dignity of unity.

A particularly low feature of this obscene farce is the party leaders' treatment of Negro members. The press speaks openly of the "buying up" of Negro delegates in the South, which reached such heights this year that the National Committee has formulated a rule designed to thwart this practice. A "lily white" delegation from Florida, committed to Dewey, has contested the seating of an uninstructed Negro delegation from that state. And the party which tries to entice Negro votes in the name of Abraham Lincoln will not let a Negro, Paul Robeson, sing at its convention. It selected a white man instead to sing Earl Robinson's great "Ballad for Americans" which Robeson helped make famous. Under such circumstances the party's choice of the song is a form of insolence.

## Stimson and Knox

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S appointment of Henry L. Stimson and Frank Knox to the Cabinet has more significance than the press as a whole has revealed. It is not only that these men are Republican stalwarts and open interventionists. FDR has selected for his "national unity" administration two of the most military-minded, reactionary politicos in America. Three days before the appointments were announced, Mr. Stimson made a speech over the NBC network. He urged immediate adoption of universal compulsory military training. He advocated sending munitions to Britain and France in American ships, convoyed by the navy, and opening American ports to British and French warships for repairs and refueling.

This former member of Hoover's Cabinet dared to base his inflammatory statements on democratic principles of freedom and equality. No doubt he trusted the American people to remember his "anti-aggression" attitude toward Spain and China—and gambled on the chance that they would not remember what underlay that attitude. Mr. Stimson's views with regard to the Far East and the Mediterranean were blatantly imperialist. He represented, indeed, an imperialism more far-sighted than that of Chamberlain, an imperialism aware of the danger of encouraging German, Italian, and Japanese rivals. When Chamberlainism was the ruling policy of imperialism, Mr. Stimson's desire to preserve China for American business interests, to keep Germany out of Spain and South America, led him into the camp of democratic opposition to "appeasement." Now Mr. Stimson wants to militarize all America to help the British ruling class, which prevented the sending of aid to loyalist Spain, which refused to cooperate with him in denying recognition to the Manchukuo puppet government.

Knox was one of Teddy Roosevelt's rough riders in the Spanish-American war. For four years he was general manager of the Hearst papers. The Hearst-hued epithets which he threw at the old New Deal as a Republican vice presidential candidate in 1936 are now reserved for opponents of conscription, intervention, and imperialism disguised as "western hemisphere defense." Before the colonel went abroad in the last world war he used soldiers stationed at Camp Dix to break up attempts of the electrical workers' union to organize electricians at the camp.

Stimson and Knox are symbols of the "national unity" toward which FDR is working—unity of reaction and militarism, regardless of political labels.

## Wire the President

THE Smith bill, passed by both House and Senate, cannot be described simply as anti-alien. It is what is known as an omnibus bill—carrying, in this case, at least four major forms of persecution. Imprisonment and fines up to ten years and $10,000 are prescribed for persons "with intent to"

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weaken the loyalty of America's military or naval forces in any way whatever. Similar penalties are provided for anyone who advocates changing the government through "force or violence" (that omnibus phrase) or who belongs to, or is affiliated with, any group advocating such change. In regard to noncitizens, the bill makes mandatory the registration and fingerprinting of all immigrants before they enter this country, as well as all aliens now here. Deportation is the penalty prescribed for failure to comply with these provisions.

The measure is an extraordinary piece of writing. It specifies, in an endless stringing of phrases, such a multitude of forbidden actions or intentions that every progressive would be subject to arrest. Any sort of anti-war activity could be construed as illegal, punishable by imprisonment.

This monstrosity was passed by the House last year, and quietly slipped through the Senate on June 15, 1940, with "amendments" to make it more oppressive. Last week the House okayed the Senate version. At this writing President Roosevelt has not yet signed the measure.

Progressives everywhere should register their protest immediately, by wire, to the President. Carey McWilliams, chairman of the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, does not exaggerate when he says this bill is designed to "destroy American democracy."

## *Incitements to Violence*

"FIFTH column" frenzy literally exploded into violence last week with the bombing of the New York *Daily Worker* and a German commercial agency. Terrorism as crude as this could not be excused by "respectable" editors of the big press, most of whom demanded prompt apprehension and punishment of the criminals. Such demands are certainly in order. These gentlemen, however, might search their own consciences. For who picked up and broadcast Westbrook Pegler's ignorant doubletalk about "Communazis"? Who zealously spread Wall Street's propaganda along with fireside chatter of invasion and "enemies within"? And finally, who stuck the Reynolds-Dies label of "traitor" on every progressive—with the Communists in the forefront—who fights for peace and civil liberties?

The FBI's interest in the *Daily Worker* bombing is rather belated. Before the Christian Front arrests in January the bureau knew that plans were made to bomb the newspaper offices, but no protective steps were taken. J. Edgar Hoover's men were too busy making card indexes of "radical" suspects. To date they haven't made much progress in tracking down the men responsible for last week's terrorism. The latter, incidentally, must be rather disappointed at the results of their work: so far from being intimidated, the Communists have protested the outrage by redoubling their efforts in the party's national election campaign.

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# "Salute to Spring"

## Meridel LeSueur's collection of short stories expresses the pain and hope of American life. A review of the Midwest author's work by Cora MacAlbert.

SALUTE TO SPRING, *by Meridel LeSueur. International Publishers. $1.50.*

MERIDEL LESUEUR has created a special kind of writing which is at once womanly and revolutionary, beautiful and real, American and without borders. *Salute to Spring,* her first volume of fiction, is a small book of twelve short stories, but large and abundant with the feeling, thought, and artistry of major creation. It is not simple to say what these stories are *about.* For they are not *about* things in the usual narrative sense. They *are* the things of which they speak with all the intense, piercing, and oftentimes intolerable reality of the things themselves. Thus Meridel LeSueur has fully achieved what she wanted in her stories, for she writes in "Corn Village," the first story in this volume, a story of living in Kansas, "I am baffled to know the meaning of people in the Midwest towns. Lewis has not been right. He has portrayed their grimaces, a seeming reality, but still only their faces in a mirror. Anderson of course has apprehended them with love, but that too has left out a great deal." Meridel LeSueur has left out nothing, save perhaps the "seeming reality."

Miss LeSueur has lived for several years now in Minnesota, but before settling there she and her family moved often about the Midwest and Far West in the American family's typical search for greener fields. It's bad where we are, it's hard, it must be better in another place—the families who could move on always thought. And the artists who grew out of these families moved away from the new lands to write, from a distance, of the western people and plains and mountains. But Meridel LeSueur says: "Oh Kansas! . . . Not going to Paris or Morocco or Venice, instead staying with you, trying to be in love with you, bent on understanding you, bringing you to life. For your life is my life, and your death is mine also." This is what the stories of *Salute to Spring* are.

The individual living and acting alone is lonely, frail, and lost. "In the mid-center of America a man can go blank for a long, long time. There is no community to give him life; so he can go lost as if he were in a jungle." But how hard it is, especially if you come from the middle class, to break through your precious individualism and really feel and act collectively! Meridel LeSueur writes knowingly of the hard way of the individual from his lonely, hopeless separatism, through his inchoate awakenings to the truth that he is not alone in his needs and purposes, to the new vitality, strength, and peaceful assurance which comes when he realizes bone-deep that only by acting with those whose needs and purposes are the same can his own be achieved.

In the fierce, bloody, and glorious story, "I Was Marching," is the painful growth of the individual middle class woman into an organizationally participating worker. The woman goes to help at strike headquarters. She hadn't wanted to go and kept away as long as she could because she was afraid.

> Not of the physical danger at all, but an awful fright of mixing, of losing myself, of being unknown and lost. I felt inferior. I felt that no one would know me there, that all I had been trained to excel in would go unnoticed. I can't describe what I felt, but perhaps it will come near to it to say that I excelled in competing with others and I knew instantly that these people were NOT competing at all, that they were acting in a strange, powerful trance of movement *together.*

She is taken aback by the woman worker to whom she offers her help. "She didn't pay any special attention to me as an individual. She didn't seem to be thinking of me, she didn't seem to see me. . . . I felt rebuffed, hurt. Then I saw instantly she didn't see me because she saw only what she was doing." The woman works in the headquarters kitchen through the fighting day and goes to the mass meeting that evening.

> I see that there is a bright clot of women drawn close to a bullet riddled truck. I am one of them, yet I don't feel myself at all. It is curious, I feel most alive and yet for the first time in my life I do not feel myself as separate. I realize then that all my previous feelings have been based on feeling myself separate and distinct from others and now I sense sharply faces, bodies, closeness, and my own fear is not my own alone, nor my hope.

MERIDEL LESUEUR. *"Salute to Spring" is this Midwestern writer's first published volume of short stories.*

In these stories the most captious could not ferret out that "false optimism" sometimes attributed to proletarian literature. Meridel LeSueur knows that the immediate outcome of the workers' struggles may be, and often is, hard to the death. But there is no alternative, no nice choice. There is this bright knowledge as it comes to old Mother Anderson whose son was killed organizing steel: "The only dead are the dead who do not have the future in them." This comes again in "Farewell My Wife and Child and All My Friends." These were Sacco's last words, and the story is of the day of Aug. 22, 1927, and of the workers' demonstrations in California against the murders of Sacco and Vanzetti in Massachusetts. The words of Sacco and Vanzetti are threaded through the story and we read that ever newly stirring credo: "If it had not been for these things, I might have live out my life talking at street corners to scorning men. I might have die unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and our triumph." And when they have been murdered in Massachusetts they live on potently and triumphantly in Ruth and Tony in California. Until then Ruth, with child, had been afraid to let Tony from her to go organizing in the Sacramento Valley.

The story "Annunciation" stands among the highest achievements of sympathetic communication. It is earnestly recommended to those who feel at one time or another that no one can ever really tell anything to anyone else unless he already knows it. What is this story? One way of putting it—the bare, the factual and almost meaningless way—is to say that it's a story of what a young woman feels when she is pregnant with her first child. Another way is that this is her profound and passionate feeling of connection and union with all that lives and ever has lived. And again another way, said in the best of faith, is that it is the most powerful appeal for having children, no-matter-what, ever written. All women must want to be childbearing mothers, even in 1940, while they're reading it. That's what is meant here by saying that "Annunciation" is of the highest order of sympathetic communication.

The writing of Meridel LeSueur is well appreciated by those who know it. Many critics have said fine things about it and some of her stories have appeared in various an-

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thologies, including O'Brien's. But for these rich, eloquent, and beautiful stories, which can give so much to the American people, there is of course, incredibly of course, no wide and popular American market. NEW MASSES readers can read her stories, but the readers of how many other magazines can? The big money magazines have never cared for such stories; today they explicitly don't want them. In the last few weeks the slickies have sent out a page of instructions addressed to writers stating their "literary" needs as "stories of war on land, in the air, under the sea, romances, adventure preferably in the Americas, north or south."

A recent letter from Meridel LeSueur sums up the problems and possibilities of the short story writer today.

The finances of the short story writer I agree with you are fantastic. And of course today the magazines are already on the road to being one of our chief propagandists for the war. Today it is useless for a writer to look to the slickies, unless he wishes to be a warmonger or to write soporifics. All America waits, hungering for a literature expressing its deepest needs and passionate poetry which I feel is at last springing from the deep and submerged humus of our life. It is the poetry Walt Whitman felt but which, then, was deeply buried as winter wheat waiting for this season. It has begun to emerge, to rise, and calls out for writers.

The stories of Meridel LeSueur are a rich blossoming of this deep and passionate poetry of America.

CORA MACALBERT.

## The Negro in the USA

THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE NEGRO, *by Charles S. Mangum Jr. University of North Carolina Press. $5.*

THIS work has considerable merit. By truly prodigious research Dr. Mangum has produced a definitive study of the contemporary legal status of the Negro in each state of the Union. His data are of great immediate pertinence and usefulness for they answer such questions as: Who is a Negro?—a problem indeed, since the definitions of the various states are not alike and even the same states have different definitions at different times. Precisely what discriminations exist against the Negro with regard to civil, property, and social rights, education, labor, and the franchise?

The book is an important addition to the growing literature describing the valiant efforts of the Negro people to achieve their complete liberation, for practically all of the hundreds of cases here cited arose through the initiative and militancy of Negro men and women seeking by court action to protect and expand their rights.

Interesting facts appear. One learns of loopholes in the anti-Jim Crow laws of New York and Michigan, of a Mississippi act which makes the advocacy of social equality a criminal offense and thus withdraws from

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its citizens the guarantees of the Bill of Rights, and of a Georgia law requiring a written account of one's "racial" ancestry that would make Goebbels blush. On the credit side one may mention the too little known and too rarely invoked laws of Connecticut and Illinois which forbid the showing of plays or motion pictures ridiculing or casting reflections upon the Negro people.

While Dr. Mangum avows his abhorrence of the injustices detailed, he falls down on the problem of what to do about them. He refers, for example, to the one period of the South's history, that of Reconstruction, when the masses ruled and these injustices were declared to be crimes, as a "dark blot," and an "intolerable situation," and deprecates as dangerous any determined agitation favoring similar action today. Thus he alludes to "the inflamed eyes of race prejudice, or the no less inflamed eyes of anti-race prejudice," and one wonders just what kind of eyes the author favors. Nonetheless, Dr. Mangum's work is a distinct aid to clear vision and effective action for those who loathe the rulers who inflict such unspeakable degradation upon fifteen million Americans and for those who in their hearts have determined that this must cease.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

## Haldane's New Book

SCIENCE AND EVERYDAY LIFE, *by J. B. S. Haldane. Macmillan. $2.*

HALDANE's latest book is a compilation of articles which appeared in the London *Daily Worker*. The volume again reveals Haldane's characteristic genius for combining popularity and scholarship in the treatment of scientific problems for the layman. Numerous illustrations drive home the interconnection between social and scientific phenomena: the chapter on "Living Fossils," for example, does not fail to mention Mr. Chamberlain.

> Scientists [Haldane observes] were not content with observing how the sun rises. They wanted to know why, and found that the earth is round and spins on its axis. So geography became possible. Socialists were not content with observing how capitalist economics work or don't work. They found out how they had arisen and how they will be superseded.

The chapter on "Mathematics and Physics" gives an excellent account of probability and atom smashing as well as a clear interpretation of the work of the Joliot-Curies and of Chadwick on the neutron and the breakup of the uranium nuclei. "Medicine and Society" contains a vital discussion of the economic causes of cancer. The chapter on "Heredity" effectively disposes of Hitler's race nonsense, "Aryanism," and sterilization.

This volume is highly recommended as a model for the growing body of scientists who are eager to make the results of modern scientific research available to a wide audience. It is informative and stimulating.

JAMES KNIGHT.

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# Brief Notices

*The Sun Never Sets,* by Malcolm Muggeridge. (Random House. $3.) This is a breezy British version of Frederick Lewis Allen's *Since Yesterday.* It suffers from all the faults of Mr. Allen's brand of headlinementality historiography. The fateful period which witnessed the colossal betrayal of the English people under MacDonald, Baldwin, and Chamberlain is treated with charming irreverence and irritating superficiality. Mr. Muggeridge is more sensitive to the blunders of British policy than he is to either their causes or their consequences. The attempt to draw fire away from Downing Street by flat wisecracks about the Soviet Union is an obvious device of evasion, stale, weary, and—for any perceptive reader—unprofitable.

*Contemporary American Authors,* by Fred B. Millet. (Harcourt, Brace. $3.75.) This is a revised version of a very useful collection of contemporary literary biographies. The selection of authors is on the whole just, though one misses the best of the younger writers, such as Richard Wright and Albert Maltz. The accompanying bibliographies should prove valuable to students. Professor Millet's lengthy critical introduction is a judicious piece of work both as history and as interpretation. He observes that the most vital literary contribution of the past decade has been made by writers who approached American life from the point of view of radical social criticism. This is highly recommended as a reference work.

*The Bedside Esquire,* edited by Arnold Gingrich. (McBride. $3.) A collection of sketches and stories which have appeared in *Esquire.* Disappointing, on the whole, even as a substitute for patent bromides on the bedside shelf. Several items, however, are first rate. Hemingway and Steinbeck are well represented. Most of the others suffer badly by contrast, particularly those which are self-consciously risque.

*The Best American Short Stories, 1940,* edited by Edward J. O'Brien. (Houghton, Mifflin. $2.75.) Considerably better than the *Esquire* collection, O'Brien's 1940 volume is nevertheless not quite up to the standard set by some of his anthologies in recent years. Many of the names are distinguished, but not all are represented by their topnotch work. Caldwell, Faulkner, Hemingway, Katherine Anne Porter, and Kay Boyle are represented. The stories by Irwin Shaw, Hans Otto Storm, and Prudencio de Pereda are skillfully done. Most of the stories show expert craftsmanship; all too few reveal any new or interesting departures in this medium.

*Readers Guide to Prose Fiction,* prepared by Elbert Lenrow. (Appleton-Century. $3.) An elaborate cross-reference index, with brief summaries, of hundreds of the outstanding novels in all languages (only those available in English are included). Grouping the titles by broad topics ("Industrial Conditions," "Family Life," "Labor," and so on) provides an extremely convenient and usable reference service. The editing is intelligent.

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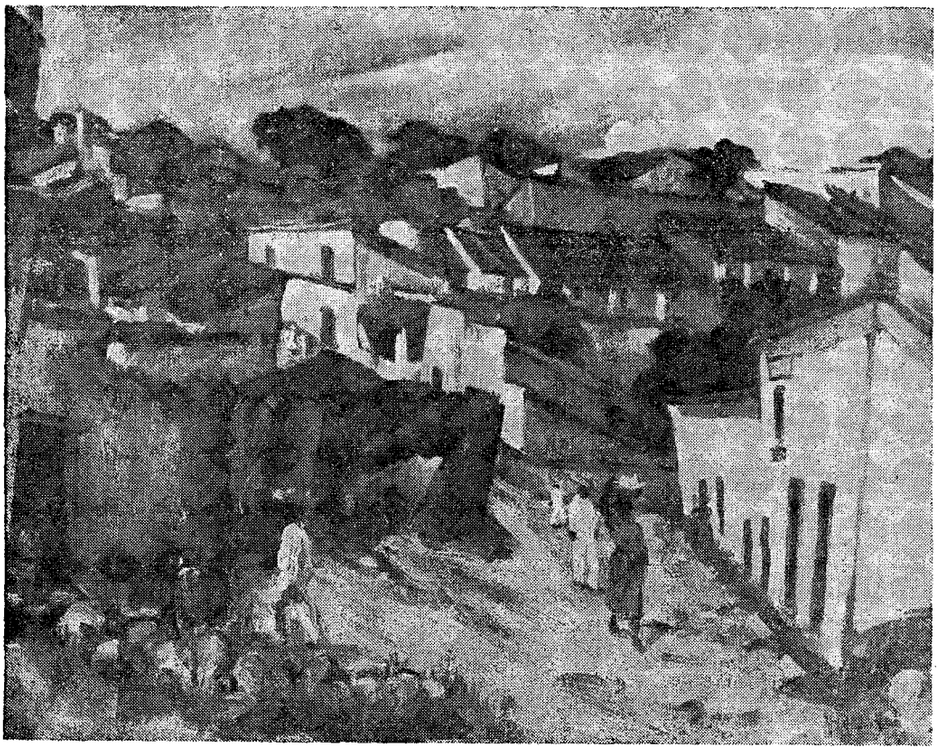

## H. Glintenkamp

READERS of NEW MASSES are familiar with Glintenkamp's work. He was an editor of the old *Masses* and a gifted political cartoonist of the Wilsonian war era. His cartoon, *The Cracked Liberty Bell,* is remembered today by witnesses of 1940's war hysteria. The cartoon has been very widely reprinted. As one of America's foremost woodcut artists Glintenkamp is widely represented in museums here and abroad. He is the author of *A Vagabond Journey—European Wanderings in Woodcuts.*

Before he started his European wanderings, Glintenkamp spent several years in Mexico. The paintings reproduced here, all done in that period, are among those now being shown (through June 29) at the ACA Gallery, 52 West 8th St., New York City.

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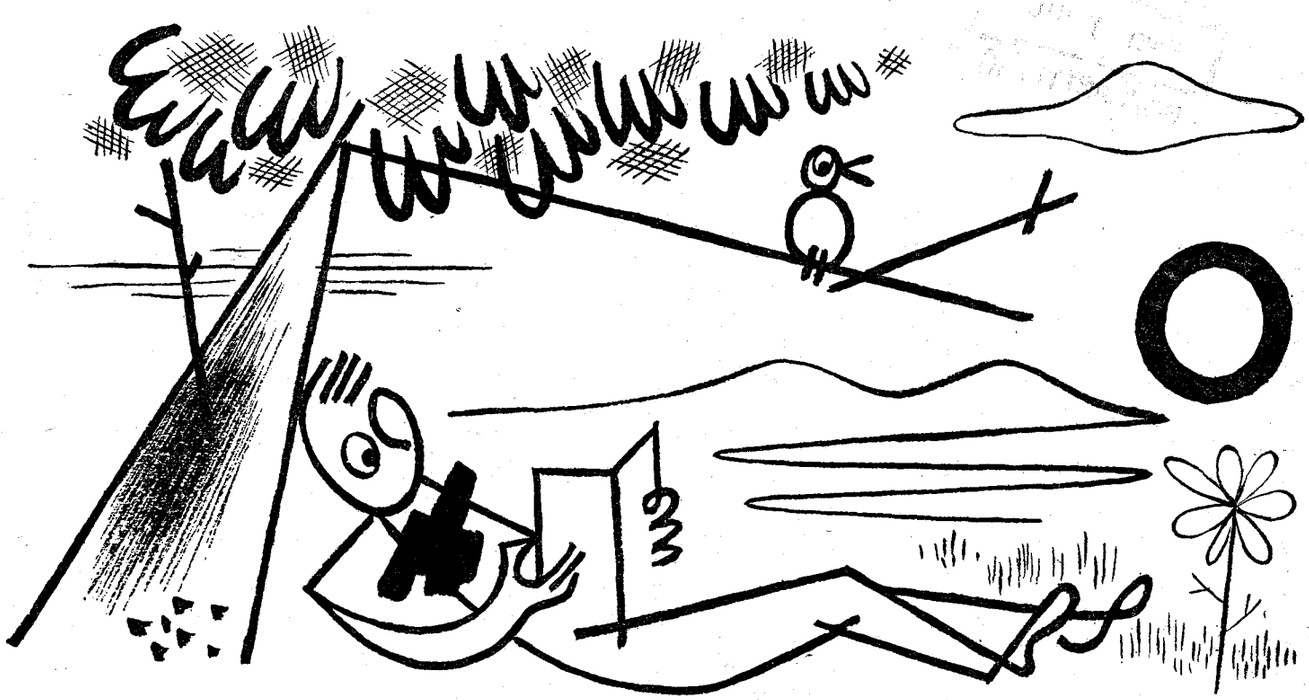

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